BOOK VI

Tell Me Stories

TELL ME STORIES

BOOK VI

(Short Stories for Children)

By

Nirmala Vaidyanathan

Sheila Subbramanian

With a foreword by

(Miss) **S. K. Ram**

AMBAR PARKASHAN

Educational Publishers

888, East Park Road, Karol Bagh,

NEW DELHI-110005 (INDIA)

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[First Edition 1984]

Reprinted : 1985

[Price Rs. 9.00]

FOREWORD

Reading has become indispensable in the world of today. It is the most potential instrument of education. The young pupil while learning English will develop a taste for reading if the material given to him is linguistically simple and thematically interesting. The authors of this series have kept these two principles in mind. The language of the series is simple and provides a good sample of modern English usage. The content of the books is exciting. The series contain stories and dialogues which cover a wide gamut of experiences extending from simple descriptions of events to the narration of tales, anecdotes, myths and legends. A sincere effort has been made to select stories which have not become stereotyped and which have an element of wit and humour. I feel that this set of books will contribute materially towards instilling in the pupils a love for reading.

(Miss) S. K. Ram
Reader
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New Delhi

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PREFACE

The TELL ME STORIES series consists of six books. They are designed to be used as Supplementary Readers for classes III to VIII. The language, that is, the grammatical constructions and lexical items of this series has been carefully controlled and graded. Sometimes the use of a few new content words of not very high frequency has become inevitable. These words, however, will not obstruct comprehension in any way as their meaning is brought out by the context in which they have been used and by the illustrations. The stories in this series are interesting and meet the needs and interests of different types of pupils. The exercises aim at promoting

(a) global comprehension by highlighting important events and attributes of characters and

(b) deep comprehension by making the child draw conclusions, form opinions and value judgements.

We are deeply indebted to Miss S. K. Ram without whose inspiration and guidance it would not have been possible to prepare this series.

We would welcome the comments and suggestions of pupils and teachers which would help us in improving the next edition of this series.

Nirmala Vaidyanathan
Sheila Subbramanian

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1. TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

A. J. Cronin
(adapted)

As we drove through the foothills of the Alps, two small boys stopped us on the outskirts of Verona. They were selling wild strawberries. The boys were rather shabbily dressed and our driver warned us against buying from them. "Don't buy," he said, "You will get much better fruit in Verona."

Yet gazing at the two little figures, with their brown skins, tangled hair and dark earnest eyes, we felt ourselves strangely attracted. My companion who spoke to the boys, discovered that they were brothers. Nicola, the elder, was 13, Jacope, who barely came up to the door handle of the car, was nearly 12. We bought their biggest basket and then went towards Verona.

Next morning, coming out of our hotel, we stopped short. There, bent over shoe-cleaning boxes beside the fountain in the public square, doing a brisk business, were our two young friends of the previous afternoon. We went over to them and they greeted us with friendly faces.

"I thought you picked fruit for a living," I said.

"We do many things, Sir," Nicola answered seriously. He glanced at us hopefully. "Often we show visitors through the town... to Juliet's tomb .... and other places of interest."

"All right", I smiled, "You take us along."

In the week which followed we saw them frequently, for they proved extremely useful to us. If we wanted a packet of American cigarettes, or seats for the opera, or the name of a restaurant that could provide good rairoli, Nicola and Jacope could be relied upon to satisfy our needs, with their usual cheerful competence. In both there was a seriousness which one respected, an air of purpose far beyond their years. What struck one most was their willingness to work hard, doing any and every kind of work that came their way.

One windy night we saw them on the stony pavement in the empty square. Nicola sat upright, his face showing his tiredness. A bundle of newspapers lay at his feet, while Jacope, his head pillowed upon his brother's shoulder, was asleep. It was nearly midnight.

"Why are you out so late, Nicola ?"

He gave me his quiet, independent glance. "Waiting for the last bus from Padra. We shall sell all our papers when it comes in".

"Must you work so hard, Nicola ? You look so tired. You and Jacope must be earning quite a bit of money.

What do you do with it ?"

He coloured deeply, but would say nothing except, "We have plans, Sir".

"Well," I said, "We're leaving on Monday. Is there anything I can do for you before we go ?"

Nicola shook his head, but Jacope said eagerly, "Sir, every Sunday we hire bicycles and go to the town of Poleto, thirty kilometers from here. But tomorrow, since you are so kind, you might send us in your car".

I had already told my driver he might have the day off and so I offered to take them to Poleto.

We drove there the next day, directed by Jacope's shrill instructions. I had expected our destination to be a humble cottage and was amazed when we stopped outside a large red-roofed villa, surrounded by a high wall.

Nicola pointed to a cafe opposite the villa and suggested I might like to wait there, promising not to be long. But after a little while I followed them into the villa which I found soon to be a hospital.

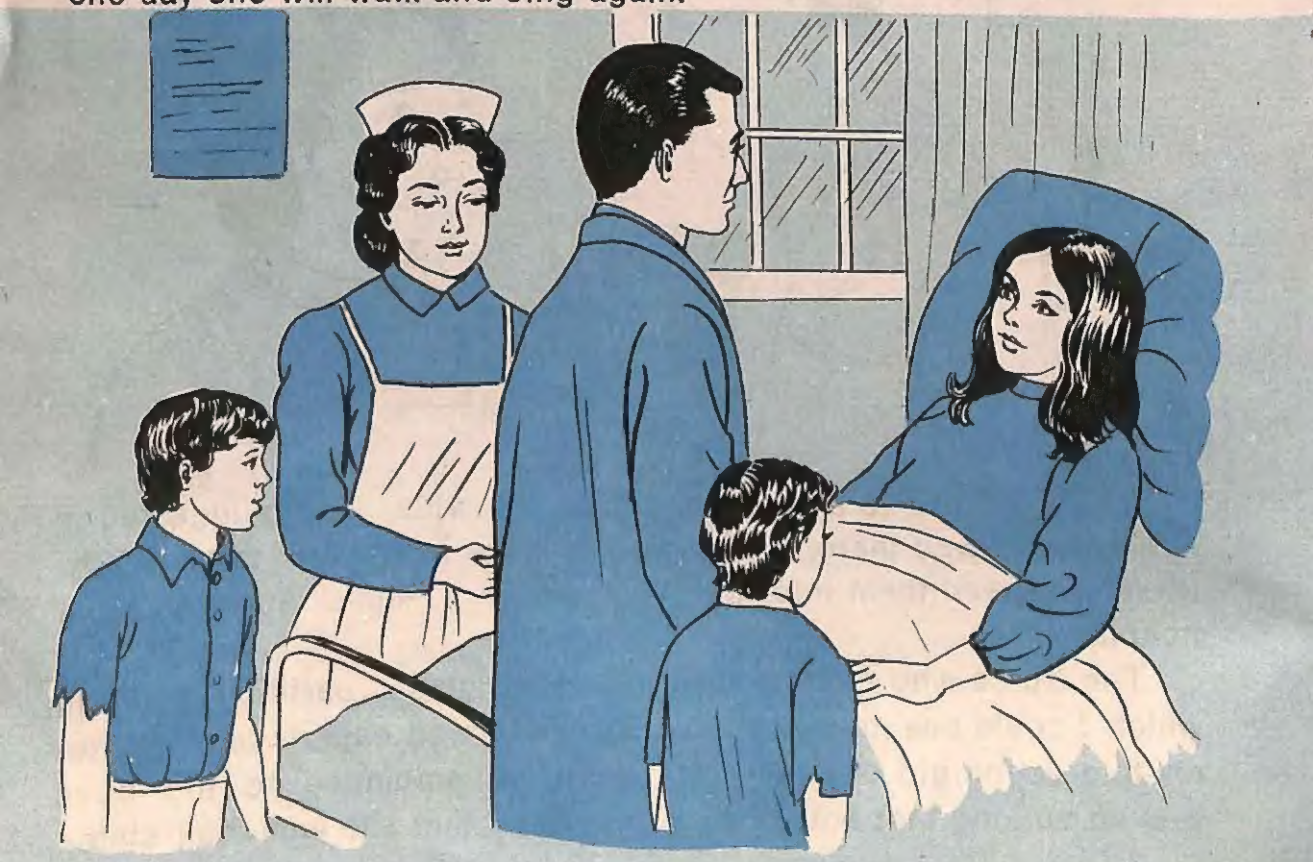
The Nurse who met me took me to a glass partition through which I could see my two young friends talking eagerly and excitedly to a young girl of about 20, whose resemblance to the boys was so striking that one knew immediately that she was their sister.

I came away from the scene but urged the nurse to tell me their story. She was very willing to do so.

The three children came of a comfortable and cultured home. Their father, a well-known singer at La Scala, had been killed early in the war and a bomb had destroyed their home. They had suffered terribly during the severe Veronese winter. The boys had joined the resistance movement. Their intimate knowledge of the countryside, and their extreme youth and insignificant size made them immensely valuable.

When it was all over, and there was peace at last, they came back to their beloved sister, and they found her suffering from tub erculosis of the spine.

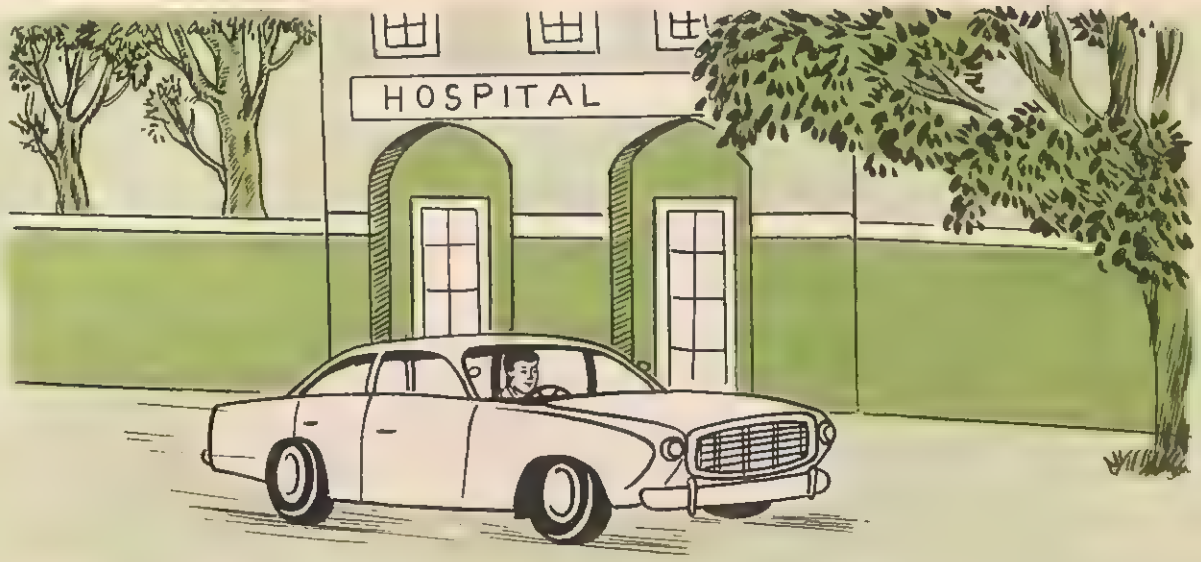
She paused, took a quick breath. "Did they give up ? I do not have to answer that question. They brought her here, persuaded us to take her into the hospital. In the twelve months she has been our patient she has made good progress. There is every hope that one day she will walk and sing again."



"Of course things are so difficult now, food so scarce and expensive, we could not keep going without charging a fee. But every week Lucia's brothers have made their payment. I do not ask what they do," she said."Work is scarce in Verona. But whatever it is, I know they do it well".

"Yes," I said. "They couldn't do it better".

I waited outside till the boys came out and drove them back to Verona. They sat beside me, quietly content. I did not say a word to show I knew their story of courage and love. Their silent epic of youthful devotion had touched me deeply. War and its horrors had not broken their spirit. In fact it had given them a strange dignity. Their selfless action brought a new nobility to human life, gave promise of a greater hope for human society. Simplified



EXERCISES

1. How did the two boys prove 'extremely helpful' to the narrator ?
2. What qualities of the boys impressed the narrator the most ?
3. Where did the boys go to in Poleto ? Who did they meet ? Why was she there ?
4. (a) What was the two boys'story of 'Courage and Love' ?
   (b) Could they, according to you, have acted in any other way ? If so, what else could they have done ?

2. RIKKI-TIKKI-TAVI

Rudyard Kipling
(adapted)

Rikki-Tikki was a mongoose. His eyes and the tip of his nose were pink;he could scratch himself anywhere with any leg—back or front, that he chose to use; he could fluff up his tail, till it looked like a bottle brush, and as he ran through the long grass he cried loudly :'Rikki-Tikki-tikki-tikki-tikki'.

One summer Rikki-Tikki got caught in a flood and was washed ashore at Segovle Cantonment. A small boy, Teddy found him and said, "Here's a dead mongoose. Let's have a funeral."

"No," said his mother. "Let's take him in and dry him. Perhaps he isn't really dead."

They took him into the house and warmed him before the fire and fed him with raw meat. Soon he was well again. He settled down as a member of the household, had breakfast with them and slept at night on Teddy's bed.

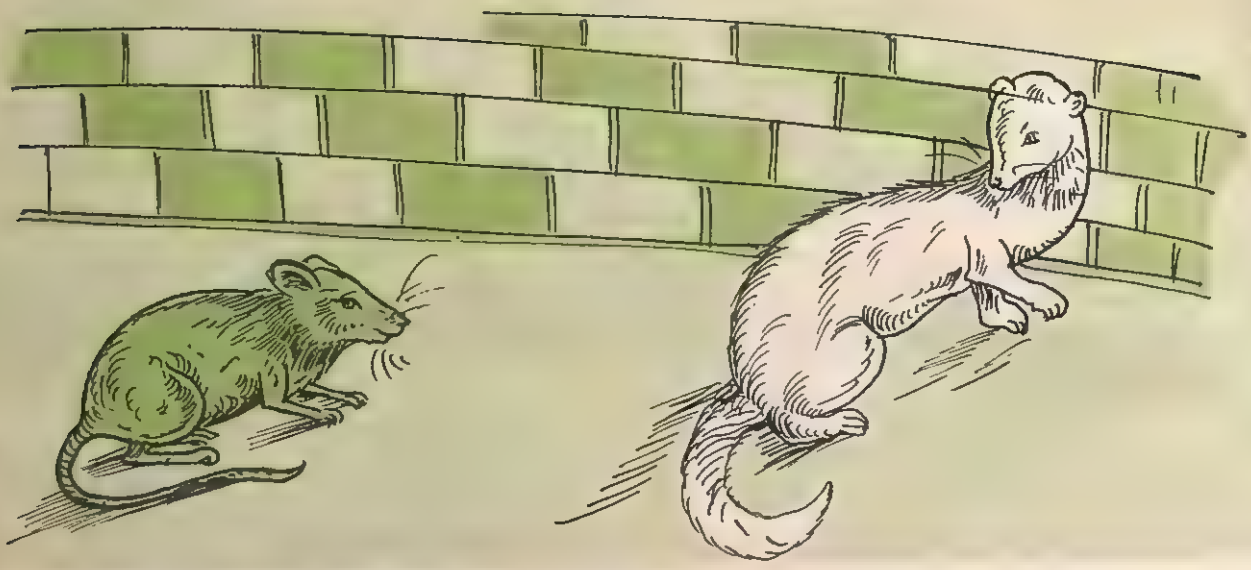
He loved wandering around the garden through the wild bushes and thick grass.

One day he heard sorrowful voices and went to see who they were. Darzee, the tailor–bird and his wife were crying sadly. "What is the matter ?" asked Rikki-Tikki "Our babies fell out of the nest and Nag ate them up", said Darzee.

"I'm new to this place," said Rikki-Tikki "Who's Nag ?"

At that moment there came a low hiss—a horrid cold sound that made Rikki-Tikki jump with surprise. Out of the grass rose the head and spread hood of Nag, the big black Cobra—stretching five feet from tongue to tail. He looked at Rikki-Tikki with his wicked snake's eyes and said "Who is Nag ? I am Nag. The great God Brahma put his mark upon all our people, when the first Cobra spread his hood to keep the sun off Brahma as he slept. Look and be afraid."

But Rikki-Tikki, was not frightened. His mother had fed him on dead Cobras and he knew that a grown mongoose's work in life was to fight and eat snakes. Nag knew that too, and, at the bottom of his cold heart, he was afraid. He sensed a movement behind Rikki-Tikki and started talking to him to distract his attention. But suddenly Darzee sang out, "Behind you : Look behind you." Rikki-Tikki sprang up into the air and just missed the string of Nagaina as she shot past under him. He landed on her back. If he had been older and more experienced he would have known that was the time to break her back with one bite. But he was too young and he left her wounded and angry.



"Wicked wicked Darzee," cried Nag and tried to reach him, but Darzee was at a safe height.

That night Rikki-Tikki met chuchundra the musk rat in the house "Don't kill me Rikki-Tikki, please don't kill me," he cried.

"I am a snake–killer not a musk–rat killer," said Rikki-Tikki scornfully. "But Nag, might mistake me for you", cried Chuchundra.

"Don't be silly," said Rikki-Tikki.

"You are inside the house and Nag is outside."

"Yes, but Chua said," and Chuchundra stopped suddenly.

"Go on. What was Chua saying ?"

"I musn't tell you anything," sobbed Chuchundra. "Cant you hear Rikki-Tikki ?"

Rikki-Tikki listened. Very faintly he heard the "scratch-scratch"—the dry scratch of a snake's scales on brickwork.

"That's Nag or Nagina," he said to himself. "And he is crawling into the bathroom sluice". He crept towards the bathroom and soon he heard Nag and Nagina whispering together. They were planning to kill Teddy and his parents. "When all the people in the house are dead he will have to go away and we'll have the house to ourselves" said Nagina to her husband. She went outside the house to wait for him while he slid into the bathroom through the sluice. He drank up all the water in the biggest jar and curved himself round the bottom of the jar.

For over an hour Rikki-Tikki waited silently, deciding how best to attack Nag.

"It must be the head," he said at last, "the head above the hood, and when I am once there, I must not let go" Rikki knew that if he didn't break Nag's back at the first jump he could still fight and perhaps kill Rikki.

But he had made his decision and brave Rikki jumped. The head was a little clear of the water jar and as his teeth met, Rikki braced his back against the bulge of the red earthenware to hold down the head. As his teeth met he knew he had just a seconds' reprieve and he made the most of it. Then he was shaken to and fro as a rat is shaken by a dog. Round and round, up and down, and to and fro on the floor, Nag thrashed around with great force, banging the mongoose against the side of the bath. Rikki was dizzy, aching and felt shaken to pieces but he held his jaws closed tight. For the honour of his family he preferred to be found with his teeth locked.

Suddenly a hot wind knocked him senseless and red fire singed his fur. Teddy's father had been wakened by the noise and had fired both barrels of a shot-gun into Nag just behind the hood. Rikki was sure that he was dead, but the head did not move and Teddy's father picked him up and said:

"It's the mongoose again, Alice. The little chap has saved our lives now." He spent the rest of the night on Teddy's bed.

In the morning he was a little stiff, but otherwise alright. "Now I have Nagina to settle with and she will be worse than five Nags. I must go and see Darzee."

Darzee was singing a song of truimph praising Rikki-Tikki and his victory over Nag.

EXERCISES

1. Why do you think, Rikki-Tikki-Tavi was given this name ?
2. (a) Why did Teddy want to have a funeral for Rikki-Tikki Tavi ?
   (b) How did the mongoose recover ?
3. How did Nag introduce himself to Rikki-Tikki Tavi ?
4. What were Nag and Nagina plotting to do ? and Why ?
5. Describe the fight between Rikki-Tikki Tavi and the Nag in the bathroom.
6. What do you think would have happened if Teddy's father had not intervened ?
7. Some qualities are listed under 'B'.
   (a) Match these qualities with the appropriate words given in 'A'
   (b) Give examples in support of your choice.

A	B
Darzee	Cruel
Nag	Brave and proud
Rikki-Tikki Tavi	Helpful

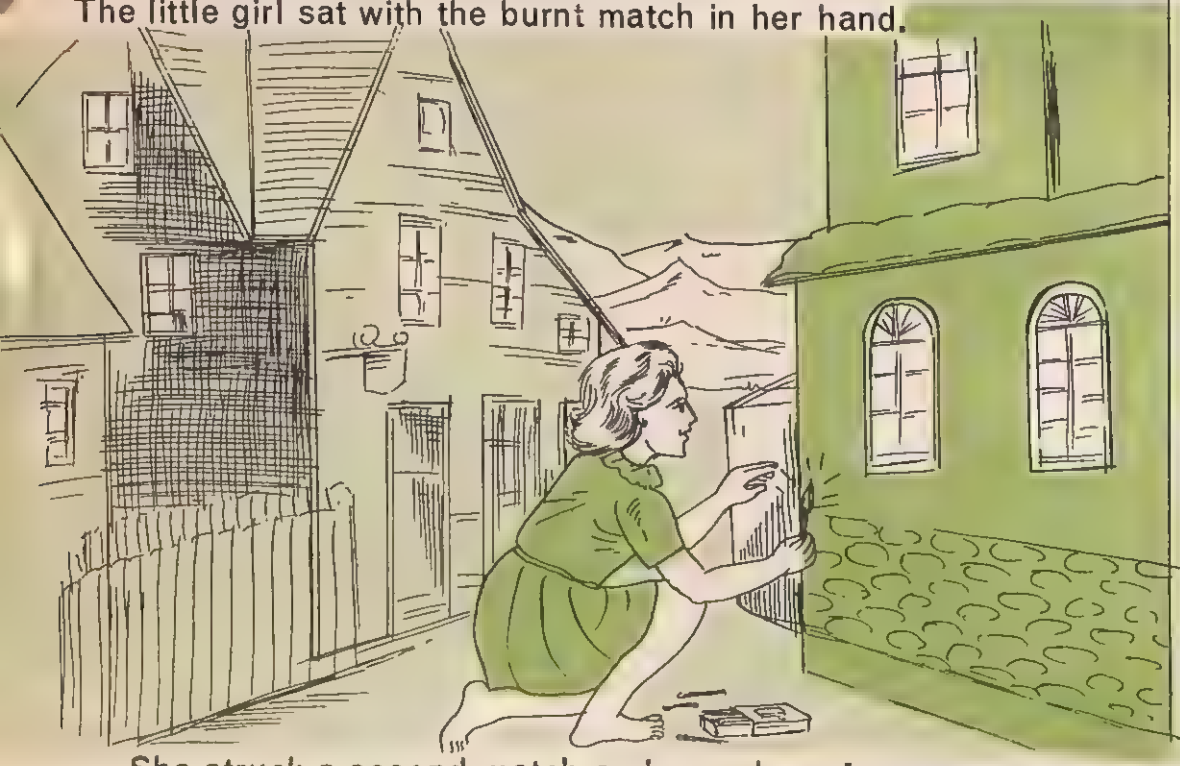
By Hans Anderson
(Adapted)

The evening of the 31st of December was bitterly cold. It was snowing heavily and an icy breeze was blowing. It seemed to freeze the marrow in one's bones. But the people of the town were busy meeting friends and giving parties to bid farewell to the dying year and welcome the new one. On this last evening of the old year, a poor little girl with no shoes and no cap was wandering about on the streets. When she left home in the morning she had slippers but they were too large for her—they were her mother's slippers. One dropped off her foot as she ran fast trying to avoid being run over by a huge carriage. The other one had been snatched up by a naughty little boy who had run away with it.

Her feet were red and blue with the cold. But the little child walked along on the snow clutching a big bundle of matches in her torn apron. No one had bought a single box of matches from her since morning and she was trembling with cold, hunger and a deep dejection. Going home was unthinkable as her father would beat her for not selling a single box of matches.

In a corner formed by two houses she sat down. She huddled herself up drawing her little feet close under her but this did not give her any warmth. She thought of home but it was as bad as the street corner. The small roof of their home had many holes.

They had stuffed them with straw and rags but the wind and snow often came in. Her hands were like ice. One little match, she thought, would warm them. She drew one out and struck it. It was a bright, warm flame and she held her chilled hands over it. And the child imagined that the little match was a large iron stove in a rich man's home and she stretched out her feet to warm them. Alpa ! in an instant the flame died away and the stove vanished. The little girl sat with the burnt match in her hand.



She struck a second match and, wonder of wonders, she saw the dining table of a rich merchant. It had the most mouth-watering dishes—hot soup, boiled eggs and potatoes, roast chicken, freshly baked bread and a hot pudding. Ah ! and the chicken and the bread seemed to be floating towards her. Then the match burnt out and only the loneliness and the chill of the night surrounded her.

She looked up into the sky and a star fell. "Now someone is dying", said the little girl softly for her grandmother had told her that whenever a star fell it meant God had called a soul. She struck another match and thought of her grandmother. She was the only person who had talked to her kindly. In the flame she saw the gentle face of her grandmother and without thinking begged her to take her away with her. Her grandmother was there and for fear of losing her she quickly lighted all the sticks in the box.

Her grandmother looked tall and beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms and both flew away together happily and went to a place where there was no cold, no hunger, no pain—they were in paradise.

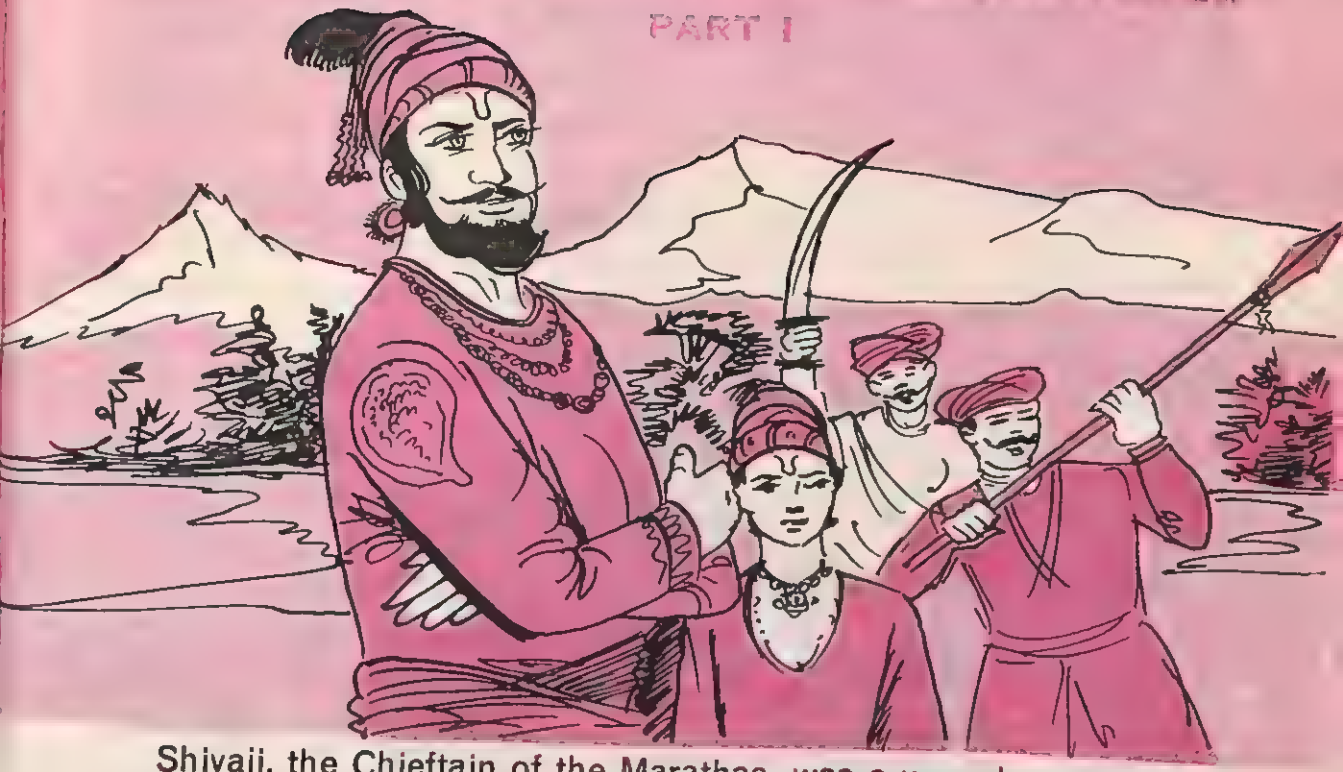
On the cold New Year's morning the poor little girl was found. She had frozen to death on the last night of the old year but her lips were smiling. People saw the burnt-out matches. "She had been trying to warm herself, poor thing !" They said. No one knew of her sweet dreams and how joyfully she and her grandmother were celebrating their New Year.

EXERCISES

1. What did the little girl sell ? Was she able to sell anything on the last day of the year ?
2. Describe the appearance of the little girl.
3. What did she dream of ? Did the first two dreams also make her happy ? If so, why ?
4. Why was there a smile on her lips when she died ?
5. If she had sold a few boxes of matches and had a little money, how do you think she would have spent it ?
6. Suppose you saw a small girl or boy who was hungry and cold ! What would you do ?

SHIVAJI A PRISONER OF AURANGZEB

PART I



Shivaji, the Chieftain of the Marathas, was a very brave warrior. He defeated the Mughal army a number of times and Aurangzeb looked upon him as his greatest enemy. After some time Aurangzeb sent an army of the bravest Afghans to the South under the very able Afghan leader Diler Khan. The Afghan had a much bigger army than Shivaji's and he conquered one Maratha fort after another. Shivaji was upset and decided to make peace with the Mughals. The Mughals allowed him to keep a few forts and asked him to come to Agra and be Aurangzeb's guest. Shivaji hesitated but the Mughals promised that no harm would come to him or to his people. Shivaji came to Agra with his son Shambuji and a few Maratha soldiers.

It was Aurangzeb's birthday. Shivaji and his son attended the grand 'durbar' in the Diwan-e-Am at Agra. But Aurangzeb did not treat him like a noble and Shivaji felt hurt. In the open court he criticised Aurangzeb and the way he had been insulted. The next day Shivaji became the Emperor's prisoner.

Shivaji knew that Aurangzeb was waiting for an excuse to murder him, so he decided to meet Aurangzeb's cunning with cunning. He pretended to be happy, joked with the soldiers on duty and sent gifts to the officers. For three months he lived as a prisoner. In the fourth month he requested Aurangzeb to send back all the Maratha soldiers who had come with him.

Aurangzeb was pleased. He was no longer suspicious. Shivaji was left with his son Shambuji and three servants. Shivaji led the life of a Mughal courtier and exchanged sweetmeats and fruits with the Mughal courtiers. At first these baskets of sweetmeats and fruits were carefully examined but then the watchmen stopped doing so. They sometimes lifted the lids, saw the sweets and fruits and let them pass.

One day big baskets of sweetmeats and fruits came from Shivaji's quarters. The guards asked Shivaji's servants what they were carrying. They replied, "Sir, our master was very ill. Now he is feeling better. These baskets contain sweets and fruits and they are for the priests". The unsuspecting guards let them go.

The two baskets were taken quite a distance from the fort, then Shivaji and Shambuji, stepped out of them. The servants who carried the baskets, were Shivaji's soldiers.

PART II : MOTHER, I'VE COME

Soon they reached the banks of the Yamuna. Shivaji gave a handful of money to the boatman and told him, "Go and tell the Emperor that Shivaji and his son have escaped and were going towards the West." He did this deliberately as they were travelling eastward. He knew the Mughals would look for him in the Western parts of the country.

Next morning they reached Mathura where they were welcomed by a friendly Brahmin.

When Shivaji and his son left their prison in a basket, Hira, who was a brave and trusted soldier of Shivaji, put on Shivaji's clothes, his string of pearls, his signet ring and lay down in Shivaji's bed. He pulled the blanket up to his neck and turned his face to the wall. But one of his arms was outside the blanket with Shivaji's signet ring. The guards thought that Shivaji who was still weak was resting.

In the afternoon Hira left Shivaji's bed, put on his own clothes and walked out of the door. He told the guards, "Shivaji is again not well. I'm going to the market to buy some medicine. Please don't disturb him." Hira went to the market and disappeared.

After sometime the guards became a little suspicious. No sound came from Shivaji's house. No lamps were lit. They realized that Shivaji was not inside. They searched for him everywhere but couldn't find him anywhere.

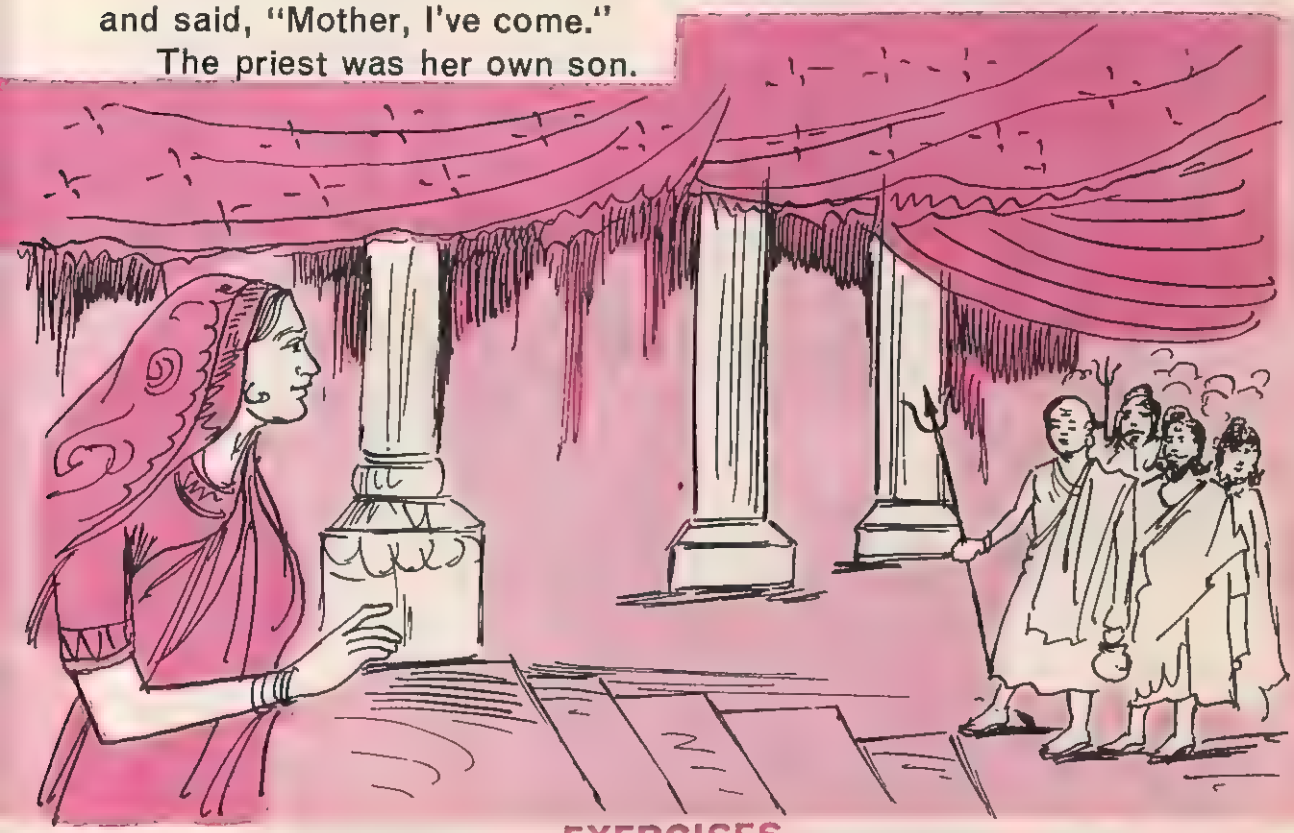
Shivaji became a hermit. He shaved his head and cut off his moustache and beard, smeared ashes on his face and body and put on saffron robes. Then he left Mathura and wandered about in Bihar and Bengal.

Jija Bai, Shivaji's mother, was looking after his kingdom as his Regent. One day as Jija Bai was sitting in her room a servant came and told her that a Brahmin wanted to meet her. She asked the Brahmin to be brought in. As soon as he came Jija Bai said,

"Have you any news of Shivaji ? Four months have elapsed since he escaped from Agra Fort but I don't know where he is." And as she said this tears rolled down her cheeks.

The Brahmin fell at her feet, placed his head on Jija Bai's lap and said, "Mother, I've come."

The priest was her own son.



EXERCISES

Part I

1. Why did Shivaji hesitate in accepting Aurangzeb's invitation ?
2. A time came when Aurangzeb was no longer suspicious of Shivaji. What did Shivaji do ?
3. Shivaji and his son escaped in baskets of sweets.
   (a) What do you think was the size of these baskets ?
   (b) Do you think there was a layer of sweets at the top of these baskets ?
4. If the soldiers had discovered Shivaji and Shambhuji in the baskets, what would they have done ?

Part II

5. Why did Hira wear Shivaji's ring and string of pearls ? Was he caught ? If not why ?
6. Why was Jija Bai not able to recognize Shivaji ?

5. THE LAST LEAF

by O. Henry
(adapted)

Greenwich Village lay west of Washington Square. It was very popular with artists as the light for painting was good and rooms could be obtained cheap.

Sue and Johnsy shared a room at the top of a three-storeyed building. They had met several months earlier at a restaurant on Eighth Street and discovered that they shared the same kind of likes and dislikes about art, food and clothes. They decided to share a room and work together. All through spring and summer they were happy. Then came winter and with it came the troubles that extreme cold brings. There were many cases of pneumonia in Greenwich village and most of the people who fell ill died. Johnsy caught the illness. She lay on her bed without any movement, and stared through the window at the wall of the house next to hers.

Sue nursed her devotedly and fetched a doctor for her. The doctor examined Johnsy and then spoke to Sue alone, down in the hall, so that Johnsy couldn't overhear.

"She has a chance," she told Sue. "But she must help herself. She must want to live. She seems to have lost all hope and no longer has a desire to live. If she doesn t want to stay alive, there is not much I can do for her. Do you know if she is worried about something ? Anything troubling her ?" "Well, she always wanted to visit Italy and paint a picture of the Bay of Naples," said Sue with a doubtful air. "I don't mean anything silly like that," growled the doctor. "Is there something more serious troubling her ? A man, perhaps ?" "A man ?" said Sue. "No, doctor. There is no man". "She is weak," answered the doctor, "but I will do all I can for her. Get her interested in something—new winter clothes, a painting—anything at all. My medicines alone will be of no use".

After the doctor Sue went into the workroom to cry. She was very unhappy but didn't want Johnsy to see her crying. Then she took an unfinished painting into Johnsy's room. She was singing as she entered the room, as if she didn't have a care in the world. But Johnsy did not turn her head or move in any way. She lay with her head turned towards the window. Sue thought she was asleep and set to work on her canvas. Gradually she became aware of a low murmuring sound. She got up from her chair and moved to the bed. Johnsy's eyes were wide open and fixed on the window in front of her counting backwards.

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"Twelve", she said and then "Eleven" A little later came "Ten" and "Nine" and then in succession "Eight, Seven". "What are you counting, dear ?" asked Sue "Six", said Johnsy in a weaker voice. "They're falling faster. I counted almost a hundred just three days ago and now they are almost all gone".

Sue gave her friend an anxious look. "Johnsy dear, what are you talking about ? Tell me. What are you counting?" Sue could see nothing outside the window. There was only the wall of the next house and there were no windows on it. A very old tree grew beside the wall and winter had already done its work.

The bare branches looked dark and spiky against the wall with hardly any leaves on them. "What is almost gone, dear ?" asked Sue. "The leaves on that tree outside the window," answered Johnsy in a low voice. "So is my life. When the last leaf falls I shall go too. I've known it for the past three days. Didn't the doctor tell you ?"

"Now Johnsy, don't talk such nonsense. What has that tree to do with your getting well. The doctor assured me there's every chance you'll get well very soon, if you'll only eat and rest. I'll get on with my painting and maybe I'll sell it and make enough to buy something that you will like".

"I don't want to eat and don't buy anything for me. There are only four leaves left and I want to watch the last leaf fall". "Johnsy, I want you to do something for me," said Sue in a firm voice, "I want you to keep your eyes closed and promise not to look out of the window until I finish working. I must have this picture ready by tomorrow and I can't cover the window as I need the light".

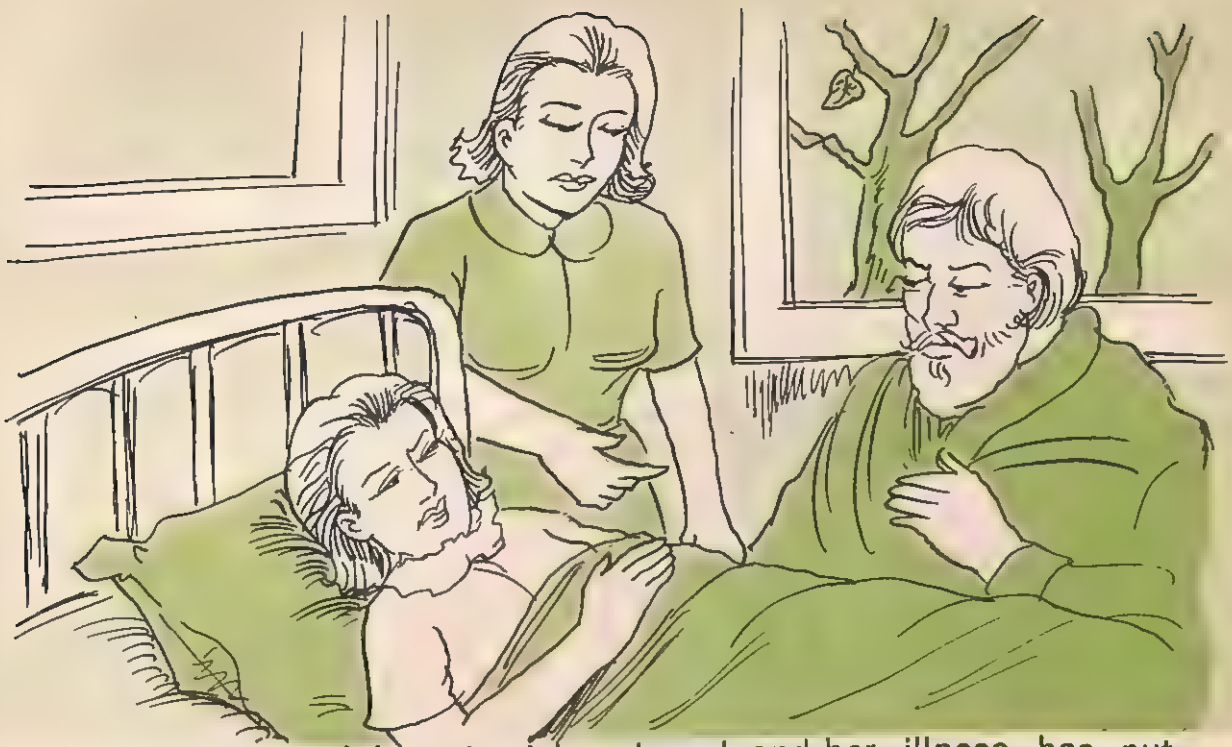
"You can work in the other room," muttered Johnsy. "I'd rather be here with you", said Sue. "I'm going to call Behraman to come up and sit for me. I want to paint a man in this picture and he would be the perfect model." "All right. Tell me as soon as you have finished," replied Johnsy rather ungraciously.

Old Behraman lived on the first floor of their house. He had been painting for forty years without producing any really good picture.

He was always talking about the great picture he would one day paint, his masterpiece as he called it, but had not even started work on it. He was past sixty and what little money he got was by sitting for other painters, not through the pictures he himself had painted. He drank too much—spending most of his money on liquor. Somehow he felt it his special duty to help Sue and Johnsy in everyway he could. He always talked about his masterpiece to them.

He was half drunk when Sue entered his room. She could smell it. But she sat next to him and told him her worries about Johnsy and her strange belief about the tree . "She really believes she'll go with the last leaf." She told him in an unhappy voice. "She is growing weaker all the time."

Behraman lost his temper over such an idea."What !"he shouted. "Are there really such fools ? I have never heard of people dying because leaves drop off a tree! No, I will not come up and sit for you. Why do you let that Johnsy think such foolish things", and then in a softer tone, "That poor little Johnsy".



Sue got up, "Johnsy is sick and weak and her illness has put these strange fancies into her head. Well, If you won't come, you won't. But I don't think you are very nice."

"Who said I will not come ?" shouted Behraman.

"Go up—I will come. It is not good for someone as good as Johnsy to lie ill. One day I will paint my masterpiece and we will all go away from here."

Johnsy was asleep when they reached her room. Sue and Mr. Behraman looked out of the window and then at each other. It was snowing and a cold rain was falling. Without a word Sue set to work to paint Behraman.

She worked almost the entire night. She had an hour's sleep and then went to Johnsy's bedside. Johnsy's eyes were fixed on the covered window. "I went to see, Sue," she said woodenly.

Sue took the cover from the window. There had been a wild wind and heavy rain throughout the night, but cne little leaf still clung to the tree—the last on it. It was still dark green near the branch but the edges were turning yellow with age. It hung stubbornly to the tree a good twenty feet from the ground.

"It is the last one" said Johnsy. "I was certain it would fall during the night in all that wind and rain. I heard the wind. It will fall today and I will die too at that time."

"Oh Johnsy, think of me," cried Sue. "What will I do without you ?"

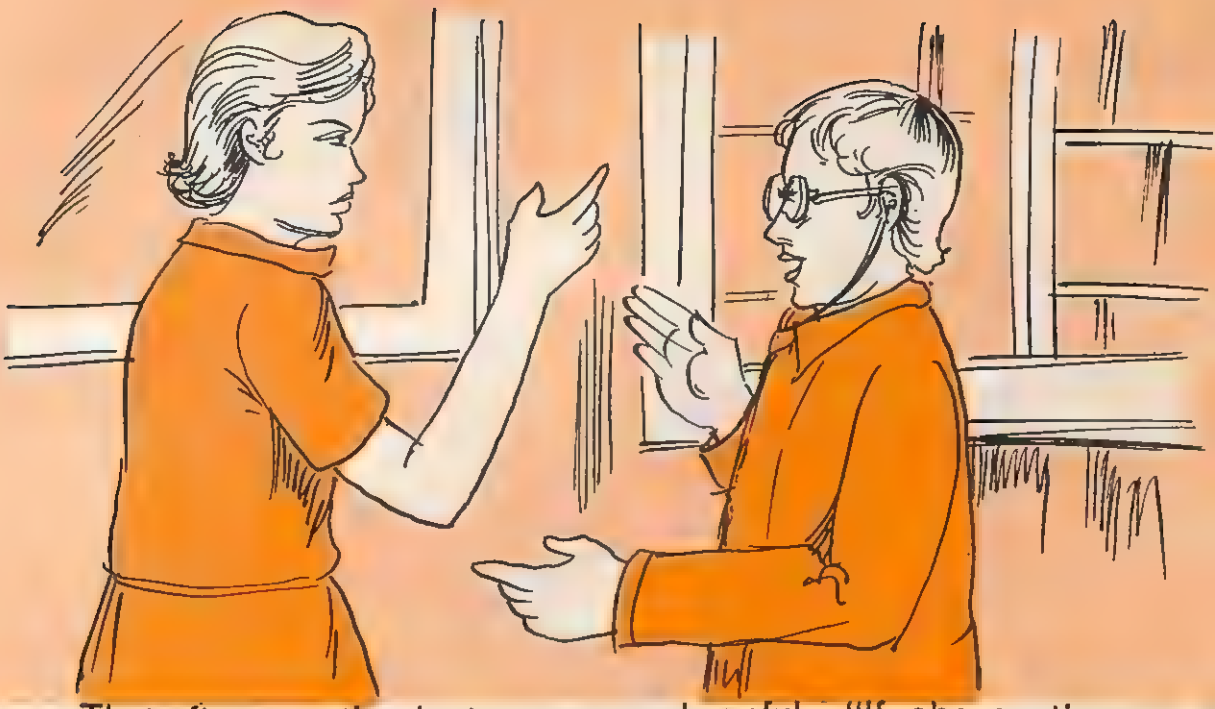
But Johnsy did not answer. She already seemed to have set out on a lonely journey to death.

The day passed slowly but at last came to an end. As darkness fell they could faintly see the last leaf still clinging to the tree. That night again there was wind and rain. When it was light Johnsy made Sue take off the cover from the window.

The leaf still remained. Johnsy looked long at it. Then she called out to Sue. "I have been a bad girl, Sue," she said. "It is wrong to want to die. That last leaf still on that tree has shown me how bad I have been. I'd like something to eat, Sue. But first bring me a mirror so that I can see what I look like. Then I'll sit up and watch you work."

An hour later, she was able to say,

"Someday I'll paint the Bay of Naples"



That afternoon the doctor was very hopeful. "If she continues to improve like this, she'll be up and about very soon. Now I must go and see another patient in this house. Name of Behraman, a painter I hear. He has pneumonia too. He is an old weak man and very ill. There is no hope for him, but we'll take him to the hospital today and make it as easy as possible for him." The next morning he pronounced Johnsy out of danger. "All she needs now is food and rest," he said.

That afternoon Sue came to Johnsy's bedside. "Johnsy dear, I have something to tell you. Mr. Behraman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. Someone found him very ill in his room. He was ill only for 2 days. His shoes and clothes were wet and as cold as ice. The night had been very cold and wild and everyone wondered where he had been out on such a night, and then they found some things—a light that he had taken outside with him, and his painting materials. There was paint too, green paint and yellow paint and ....." She stopped and then continued. "Look out of the window Johnsy at the last leaf on the tree. Didn't you wonder why it never shook when the wind was blowing ? Oh, dear Johnsy, it was Behraman's masterpiece—he painted it, the last leaf."

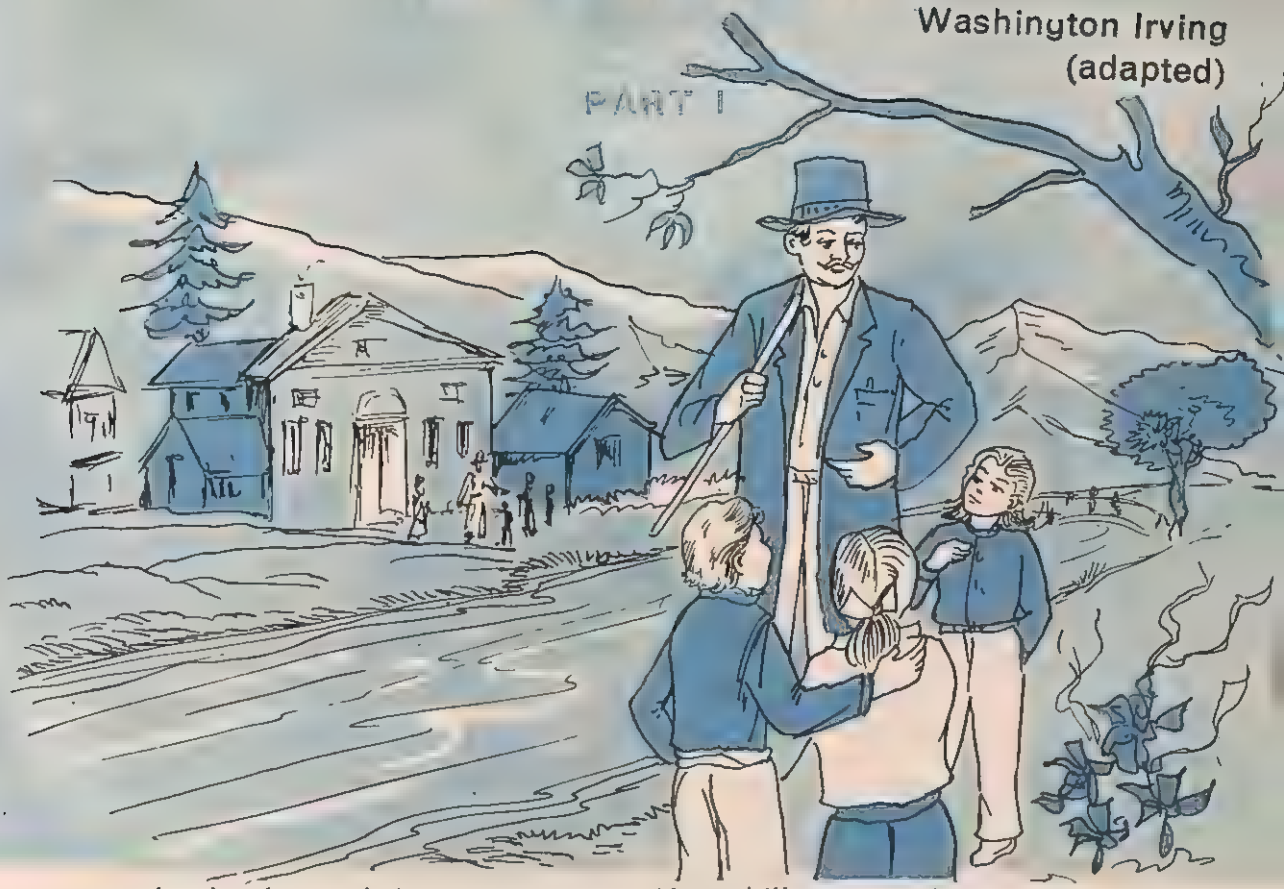
EXERCISES

1. My medicines alone will be of no use.
   (a) What else, besides medicine, was needed ?
   (b) What suggestions did the doctor make to obtain it ?
2. Why was Sue singing as she entered Johnsy's room ?
3. "Don't talk such nonsense".
   (a) Who was talking nonsense ?
   (b) What was the 'nonsense' ?
4. "Someday I'll paint the Bay of Naples". What does this statement of Johnsy tell you about her state of health ?
5. How did Behraman catch pneumonia? Give your answer in two or three sentences.
6. Why did Sue call the painted leaf Behraman's masterpiece ?

6. RIP VAN WINKLE

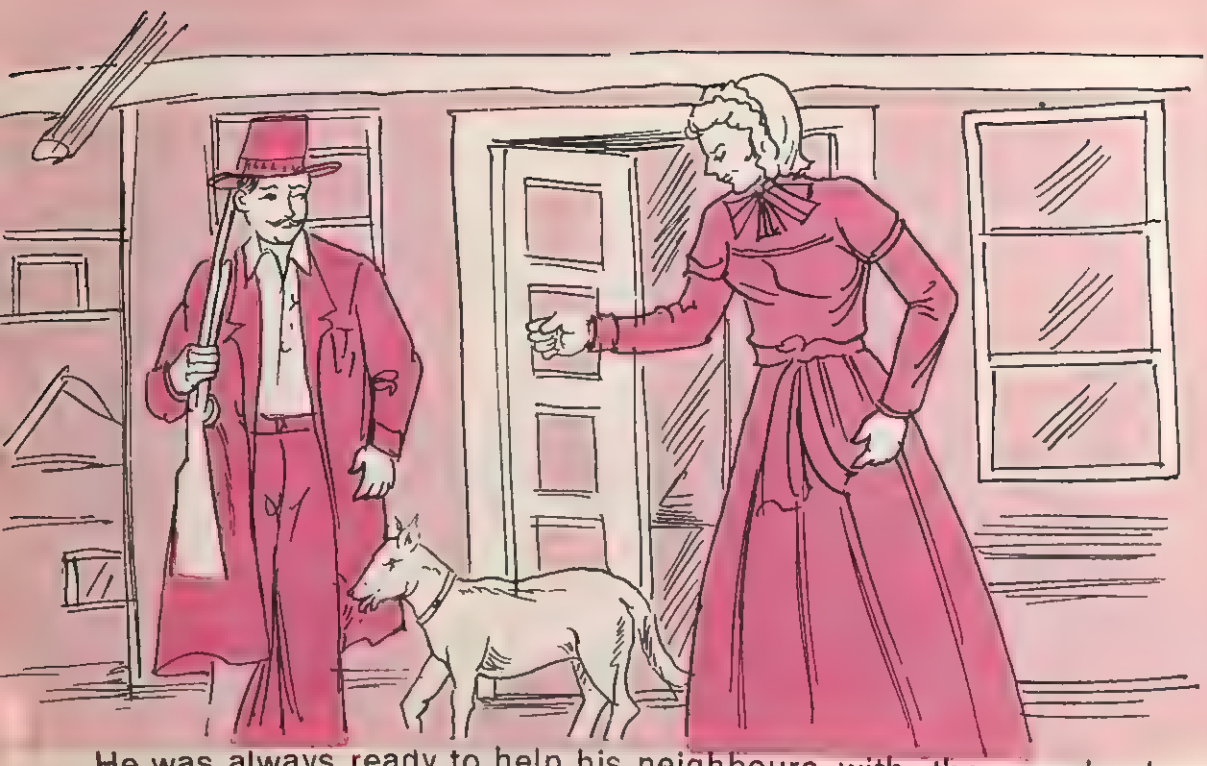
Washington Irving
(adapted)

PART I



At the foot of the picturesque Kaatskill mountains, west of the Hudson river, lay a tiny village whose yellow brick houses gleamed in the sunlight.

In that same village there lived, many many years ago, a simple, good-natured fellow called Rip Van Winkle. His ancestors were great soldiers but Van Winkle had none of their soldierly characteristics. He was a kind neighbour, and a popular man with all the people in the village. He was a favourite with children and was always ready to help with their games—shoot marbles with them, mend their toys, teach them to fly kites and tell them long stories of ghosts, witches and Indians. Whenever he went about the village he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him. He enjoyed it all and never became angry.



He was always ready to help his neighbours with the roughest of work, run errands for their wives, build stone fences and do any odd jobs, but was very lazy in his own home. His wife was always scolding him, and nagged him so much that he often went away into the woods to escape her. Rip's constant companion was his dog, Wolf. Dame Van Winkle looked on them as companions in idleness, and even blamed the dog for his master's laziness.

As years went by this scolding only grew worse and master and dog took to staying away from home for as long as possible.

One day Rip and Wolf went squirrel hunting and went so high up the mountain that they realised they would never be able to get back to the village before dark. Rip sank down on a grassy patch. On one side flowed the majestic Hudson and on the other lay the deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, the bottom filled with pieces of rock from the overhanging cliff. As he was preparing to go down the mountainside he heard a voice from a distance calling out "Rip Van Winkle ! Rip Van Winkle !" He looked round but could see nothing. He thought he must have imagined it but he heard the cry again. "Rip Van Winkle ! Rip Van Winkle." At the same time

Wolf's fur bristled and he gave a low growl. Rip now began to feel slightly scared. He looked down anxiously and saw a strange figure climbing up the rocks and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see human beings in this lonely and unfrequented place, but thinking it to be one of his neighbours in need of help he hurried down. The figure turned out to be a stranger at close quarters. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grey beard. His dress consisted of an old fashioned Dutch jerkin, several pairs of breeches, the outer one a large one, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides. On his shoulders he carried a strong barrel which appeared to be full of wine.

He made signs to Rip to come and help him with the load. Rip obliged and they took turns at carrying it up the hill. As they climbed Rip heard, at intervals a long sound like thunder, coming out of a deep cleft, between high rocks. Passing through the cleft they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular rocks, overhung with twining branches so that one could only catch brief glimpses of the sky and clouds. During all that time neither man spoke a word though Rip was very puzzled as to why the wine should be carried up to that wild part of the mountain.

On entering the amphitheatre he saw a strange sight. On a level spot in the centre sat a group of odd-looking men playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a queer, old fashioned manner and their faces were peculiar—one had a large head, a broad face and small piggish eyes, another seemed to have only a nose covering his entire face. They all had beards of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander He was a fat old man with a brown leathery face. He wore a laced doublet held up by a broad belt, a hat with a feather in it, red stockings and high heeled shoes, with roses on them. The whole scene reminded Rip of an old flemish painting he had seen in the village parson's house. What seemed specially odd to Rip was that though the men seemed to be entertaining themselves they were all unsmiling and looked serious. The noise of the balls caused the thunder-like sound which Rip had heard as he came up the hill.

They looked so strangely at him as he drew close to them that he trembled with fear. His companion made a sign to him to pour out the wine into cups and serve all the men. Rip nervously obeyed. The men returned to their game and gradually Rip's fears lessened. Soon he began to drink the wine too and found it so delicious that he took cup after cup of it till he fell into a deep, deep sleep.

PART II

On waking up he found himself again on the grassy patch where he had been before he had seen the old man. The birds were chirping and hopping in the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling above. Surely, I haven't slept here all night , thought Rip. He thought back of all that had happened and exclaimed "Oh that wine ! It was the wine which has done this to me. Oh dear, What excuse shall I give to Dame Van Winkle ?"

He looked round for his gun but instead of the clean, well-oiled one he had had, there was only an old rusty gun lying beside him. He felt sure the strange men had robbed him. He saw no signs of Wolf and though he whistled no dog came running to him. He decided to climb up to the amphitheatre again and demand his gun and dog back. He found it difficult to get up, his bones felt stiff and he was quite unlike his usual active self. "Sleeping on these mountains does not agree with me," he thought "If I should be laid up with rheumatism I'll never hear the last of it from Dame Van Winkle."

With great difficulty Rip finally reached the top. But what surprise ! There was no amphitheatre.

He called again and again, but received no answer though he waited a long while. He dreaded meeting his wife but decided there was nothing else he could do and with an anxious heart he walked homewards.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought he knew everyone for miles around. Their dress too was of a different fashion from that with which he was familiar. They all stared at him with equal surprise, and all of them stroked their chins at sight of him. This repeated action made Rip feel his chin too and he was amazed to find that his beard had grown a foot long.

He now came to the edge of the village. A group of children ran after him, pointing at his grey beard and shouting with laughter. The very village was altered. It was longer and had more people—everything was strange. He was bewildered, surely this was his native village which he had left only the day before. There stood the mountains, there ran the gleaming Hudson river, all the hills and dales were familiar. He shook his head puzzled. "It was the wine," he told himself. He went towards his old house. A half starved dog which looked like Wolf was creeping about. Rip called his name, but the dog snarled and showed his teeth and went away. Rip was deeply hurt. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me".

He entered the house which Dame Van Winkle had kept so neat. It was empty, lonely and seemed as if no one had lived in it for a long time. Rip then hurried to his old favourite inn but that too was gone. The people standing around were different. "Which side do you vote?" they asked him; "are you Federal or Republic?" "Alas, gentlemen," answered Rip, dismayed. "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him."

Immediately there was an outcry, "a Tory! a Tory! a spy! a refugee. Take him away!" At last one of them, asked Rip who he was and what he wanted there. "I've only come to meet my old friends," replied Rip.

"Well, who are they ?" asked the man.

"Where's Nicholas Vedder ?" said Rip.

"Nicholas Vedder ! He died eighteen years ago."

"Where's Brom Dutcher ?"

"He joined the army at the beginning of the war. Some say he was killed. Anyway, he never came back."

"Where's Van Bumnel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went to the wars too, became a great military general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart sank at hearing these sad changes. But he was puzzled too at the answers. They seemed to deal with such long periods of time and of matters he could not understand—war, Congress. He cried out in despair, "Does no one here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle," exclaimed two or three.

"There he is, leaning against the tree." Rip turned round and saw a man who looked exactly like he had looked the day he went up the mountain. His confusion grew. "God knows I'm not myself. I'm somebody else—That's me there? No, that's somebody else in my shoes!" The people around him looked at each other and tapped their heads as if to say, "Poor old man. He is slightly mad."

At that moment there came a young woman holding a baby in her arms. "Hush Rip," she was saying, "Don't cry now." The baby's name, the woman's manner, the tone of her voice, all brought back memories in Rip. "What is your name, my good woman ?" he asked.

"Judith Gardenier".

"And your father's name ?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home. His dog came back without him. I was then only a little girl. We never knew what happened to him."

"Where's your mother ?"

"Oh, she too died a little while back," answered the woman.

Rip heard all this in delight. He caught the woman and child in his arms. "Oh my dear child, I am your father. I was young Rip Van Winkle once. I am old Rip Van Winkle now. Does no one remember me ? All stood amazed till an old woman came tottering up. "Ah yes ! It is Rip Van Winkle himself", she said. "I recognise him." Soon one or two others, old men now, came up and identified him as indeed being Rip.

Rip told his story and everyone listened in amazement. Old Peter Vander Donk was well versed in all the old legends and history of the neighbourhood. He told the people that it was a fact, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was said that the great Hendrick Herdson, the first discoverer of the river and country, returned once every twenty years with his men to visit the place of his brave deeds.

Much later everyone went home. Rip's daughter took him to her house. Both she and her jolly husband insisted that Rip should make his home with them now. He consented with great satisfaction. He soon found a few of his old friends but he became popular with the younger generation too and a favourite of all the children.

EXERCISES

Part I

1. Why was Rip Van Winkle a popular figure in his village ?
2. Why did Rip Van Winkle sometimes go away into the woods ? Who went with him ?
3. Who called out to Rip Van Winkle ? Describe this person. What was he carrying ? What did he ask Rip Van Winkle to do ?
4. Why was Rip surprised when he reached the amphitheatre ? What was Rip asked to do ? What did Rip help himself to ?

Part II

1. (a) Why was Rip afraid of meeting his wife ?
   (b) Why was Rip surprised as he walked towards his village ?
   (c) What did he realize when he stroked his chin ?
   (d) What had happened to all his friends ?
2. "Rip heard all this in delight". What did he hear and what delighted him ?
3. (a) Do you think Rip Van Winkle ended his days happily ? Did he deserve this end ?
   (b) What would have happened if Rip had not drunk the wine of the little men ?

7. JEAN VALJEAN---the convict

PART I

Victor Hugo
(adapted)

There was a loud knock at the door. "Come in !" said the bishop.

The door opened and a man entered. He had his knapsack on his back, his stick in his hand, a wild look in his eyes. His clothes were torn and patched and he looked dangerous.

The bishop was about to ask the stranger what he wanted, when, leaning with both hands on his stick, the stranger said in a loud voice :

"See here ! My name is Jean Valjean. I am a convict; I have been nineteen years in the galleys. Four days ago I was set free. During these four days I have walked from Tonlon. Today I have walked twelve leagues. When I reached this town this evening I went to the mayor's office and showed him my yellow passport. Then I went to an inn and they sent me away because of my yellow passport. I went to another inn, they said, "Get out !" Nobody would have me. I went to the prison, and the jailor would not let

me in. I crept into a dog-kennel, the dog bit me. It seemed as if it knew who I was. I went into the fields to sleep under the stars; there were no stars. I thought it was going to rain so I came back to the town to get the shelter of some doorway..... What is this place ? Is it an inn ? I have money; my savings, one hundred and nine francs which I earned in the galleys—by working hard for nineteen years. I will pay what do I care ? I have money. I am very tired—twelve leagues on foot, and I am so hungry. Can I stay ?"

"Maglovie," said the bishop to the maid servant, "lay the table for three."

The man took three steps, and came near the lamp which stood on the table. "Stop," he exclaimed, as if he had not been understood, "not that. Didn't you understand me ? I am a galley-slave—a convict.'He took out a large sheet of yellow paper from his pocket. "This is my passport, yellow as you see. This is why I am kicked out wherever I go; will you read it ? I know how to read. I learned in the galleys. See, here is what they have put in the passport; 'Jean Valjean, a liberated convict, ... has been nineteen years in the galleys; five years for burglary; fourteen years for having attempted four times to escape. This man is very dangerous There you have it ! Everyone has driven me out; will you receive me ? Is this an inn ? Can you give me something to eat, and a place to sleep in ? Have you a stable ?"

"Maglovie," said the bishop, "put some sheets on the bed in the guest room," The bishop then turned to the convict, "Monsieur, sit down and warm yourself. We are going to take supper presently, and your bed will be ready while you eat."

At last the man understood. His expression which till then had been fierce now expressed surprise, doubt and joy. He began to stutter like a madman.

"What ? You will keep me ? You won't drive me away ? A convict ! You call me MONSIEUR and don't say, ' Get out, dog ' as everybody else does. You are an innkeeper, aren't you ?"

"I am a priest," said the bishop.

"Oh, noble priest ! A good priest is a good thing. Then you don't want me to pay you ?"

"No," said the bishop.

Maglovie brought a plate and set it on the table. "Put this plate as near the fire as you can," he told her..... "You must be cold Monsieur."

Everytime the bishop said 'Monsieur', the face of the convict lit up with joy

"It is cold today ", said the bishop, "And the lamp does not give enough light."

Hearing this the bishop's sister brought out two silver candlesticks, lighted the candles and placed them on the table along with the six heavy silver plates.

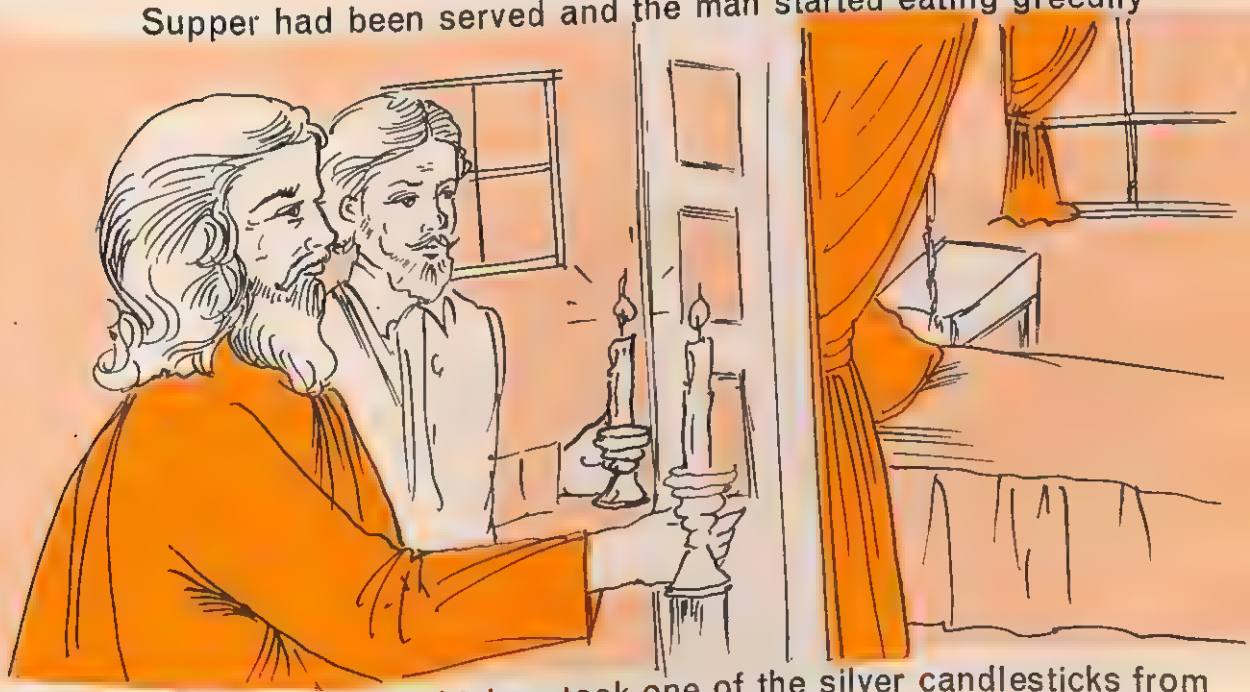
"You are good," said the man with a sigh.

The bishop touched his hand gently and said, "This is the house of God. You are suffering. You are hungry and thirsty, I welcome you. And do not thank me. This is the home of no man, except him who needs shelter, whatever is here is yours."

"Oh the heat, the cold, the galley's crew, the whippings—for nineteen years this continued. It was a dog's life—even dogs are happier."

"Yes," answered the bishop, "you have left a place of suffering. But remember if you leave that place with hate and anger against men you are worthy of compassion, but if you leave it with goodwill, gentleness and peace you are better than any of us."

Supper had been served and the man started eating greedily



After supper the bishop took one of the silver candlesticks from the table, handed the other to his guest, and said to him,

"Monsieur I will show you to your room."

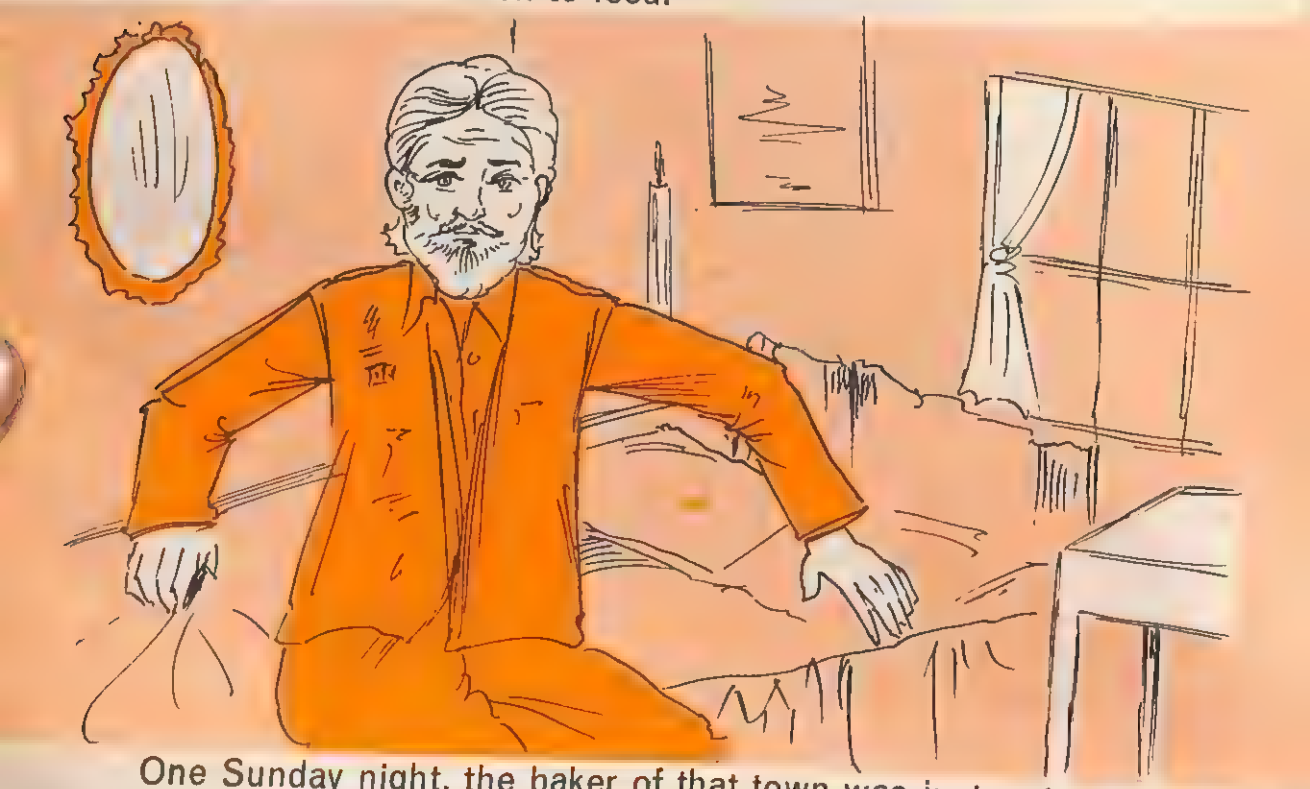
The man followed him. He lay down on the clean bed, completely exhausted, and soon fell asleep.

JEAN VALJEAN IS OVERWHELMED PART II

Towards the middle of the night, Jean Valjean woke up.

He started thinking about his life. He had lost his parents when very young. Jean Valjean had but one relative left, his sister, a widow with seven children. This sister had brought up Jean Valjean, and as long as her husband lived, had taken good care of her younger brother. When her husband died Jean Valjean was only twenty-five years old and his oldest nephew was eight and the youngest one. He took the father's place and worked very hard. He had no friends and became very quiet

Soon winter came. It was very severe. Jean had no work and the family had no bread. There was no bread in the house and there were seven children to feed.



One Sunday night, the baker of that town was just going to bed when he heard someone break the window-pane of his shop. He quickly came down and saw someone steal a loaf of bread. The thief rushed out so did the baker. After running hard for some time, the baker caught him The thief was Jean Valjean.

Jean was brought before the magistrate , found guilty and sentenced to five years in the galleys. He made many attempts to escape but every time he was caught and his term of imprisonment was increased. From year to year in the galleys his soul withered more and more. Although his soul had withered, his eye was dry. When he left the galleys, he had not shed a tear for nineteen years.

Soon Jean drifted into sleep. As the Cathedral clock struck two, Jean Valjean woke up. He had slept for about four hours. He was no longer tired and he could not sleep.

One thing which weighed on his mind was the sight of the six silver plates which he had seen the servant put in the cupboard. They were solid, old silver and would bring at least two hundred francs, double of what he had earned during nineteen years labour. To steal or not to steal—he thought over this for an hour. As the clock struck three, he got up, went to the cupboard and took the silver plates; put them in his knapsack and quietly left the bishop's house.

Next morning when the bishop and his sister had just finished breakfast there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said the bishop.

The door opened. Three fierce-looking soldiers entered holding Jean Valjean. The soldiers saluted the bishop. The bishop went forward and greeted Jean Valjean, "I'm glad to see you," he said. "I gave you the candlesticks also, which are silver like the rest and would bring two hundred francs. Why did you not take them along with your plates ?"

Jean Valjean could only gaze at the bishop.

"So what this man said was true," said one of the soldiers. Addressing the bishop he said, "Sir, he was running through the woods like a thief, so we caught him. We saw these silver plates in his haversack and knew they were yours, so we brought him here."

"It is all a mistake," smiled the bishop. "The silver plates are his, please set him free." The soldiers released Jean Valjean and went away.

The bishop then took the two silver candlesticks and giving them to Jean Valjean said, "Now you can go in peace. But never forget to use this silver to become an honest man." Jean Valjean felt like a man who is just about to faint.

The bishop blessed him and said, "Jean Valjean, my brother, you belong no longer to evil but to good. It is your soul, that I am buying for you. I withdraw it from darkness and give it to God."

EXERCISES

Part I

1. Why did the stranger have 'a wild look' in his eyes ? Give two reasons.
2. Jean Valjean was truthful. Give an example in support of this statement.
3. Why was Jean Valjean given a yellow passport ? Was it humane on the part of the government to have done this ?
4. Jean Valjean "began to stutter like a madman." Why ?
5. Where was the silver-ware in the room when they had supper ?

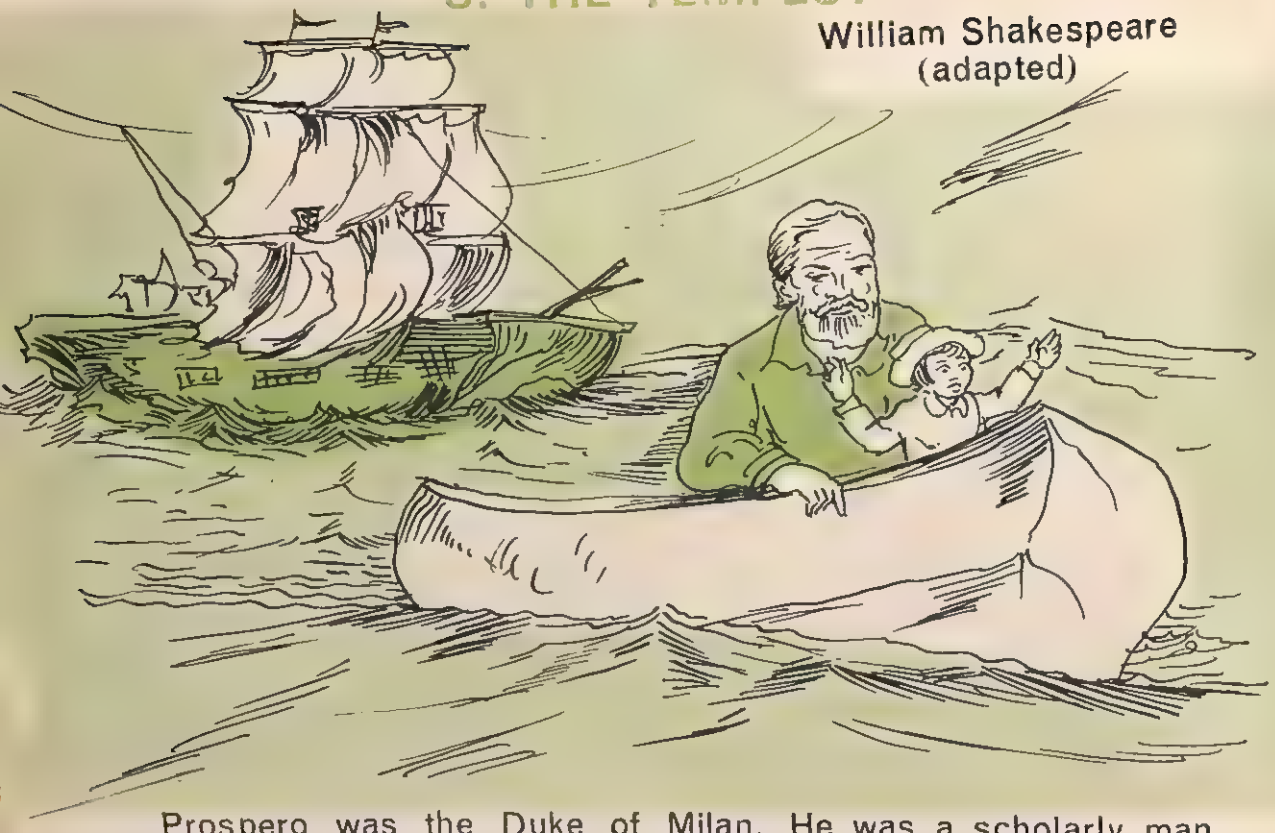
Part II

1. Jean Valjean stole the six silver plates. Do you think he was justified in doing so ? Why ? (or why not ?)
2. (a) How did the bishop save Jean Valjean from getting convicted ?
   (b) Why did he do so ?
   (c) Do you think he achieved his objective ? (Read LES MISERABLES by Victor Hugo and find out for yourself)
3. (a) Match the words given under 'B' with the names of people given under 'A'.
   (b) Give examples to support your choice.

'A'	'B'
Jean Valjean	kind and godly
The Bishop	conscious of his duties
	ill-used by the world
	warm-hearted and generous

8. THE TEMPEST

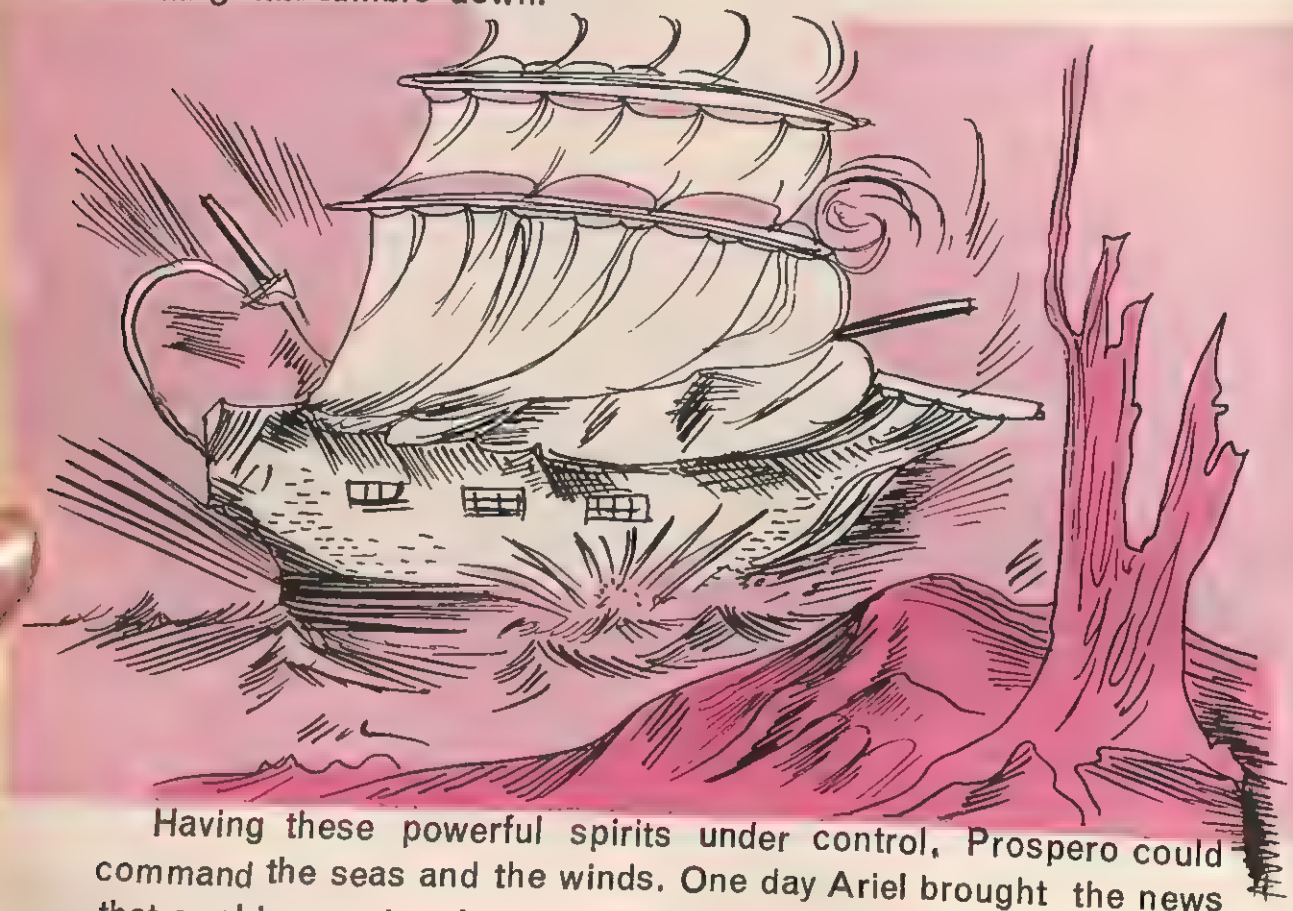
William Shakespeare
(adapted)



Prospero was the Duke of Milan. He was a scholarly man, deeply interested in studies, especially those dealing with magic. He was greatly loved by his people and ruled them wisely and gently. But gradually he left the actual management of his state affairs to his brother Antonio, and devoted himself to his studies. Antonio soon grew ambitious. He wanted to become the Duke of Milan. He did not dare kill Prospero because he knew the people of the land loved him and would rise in revolt against his killer. But with the help of the king of Naples he took over the dukedom. He had Prospero and his baby daughter, Miranda carried to a ship. When the ship was a few miles out on the sea he had them put into a little boat which had no sail or mast, no tackle or food. He was sure the duke and Miranda would die. But unknown to him Prospero's faithful servant Gonzales had put in the boat some food and drink, clothes and a few of Prospero's books which he valued more than even his dukedom.

Their food lasted till they were thrown ashore on a deserted island. Prospero found some caves which could be divided into several rooms and he tried to make their rocky home as comfortable as possible for himself and his baby daughter. His chief delight was in teaching Miranda and she proved to be an excellent pupil. The island had been put under a spell by a wicked witch named Sycorax. She had died a short while before Prospero had landed on the island. He found that many good spirits had been imprisoned by her because they would not obey her wicked commands. He set them all free and they always obeyed him in everything after that. Ariel was the chief of all these spirits. He was a lively cheerful fellow, with a great sense of mischief though there was no wickedness in him. His greatest enjoyment was in teasing an ugly monster called Caliban—a strange mis-shapen creature who looked more like an ape than a human being. Caliban was the

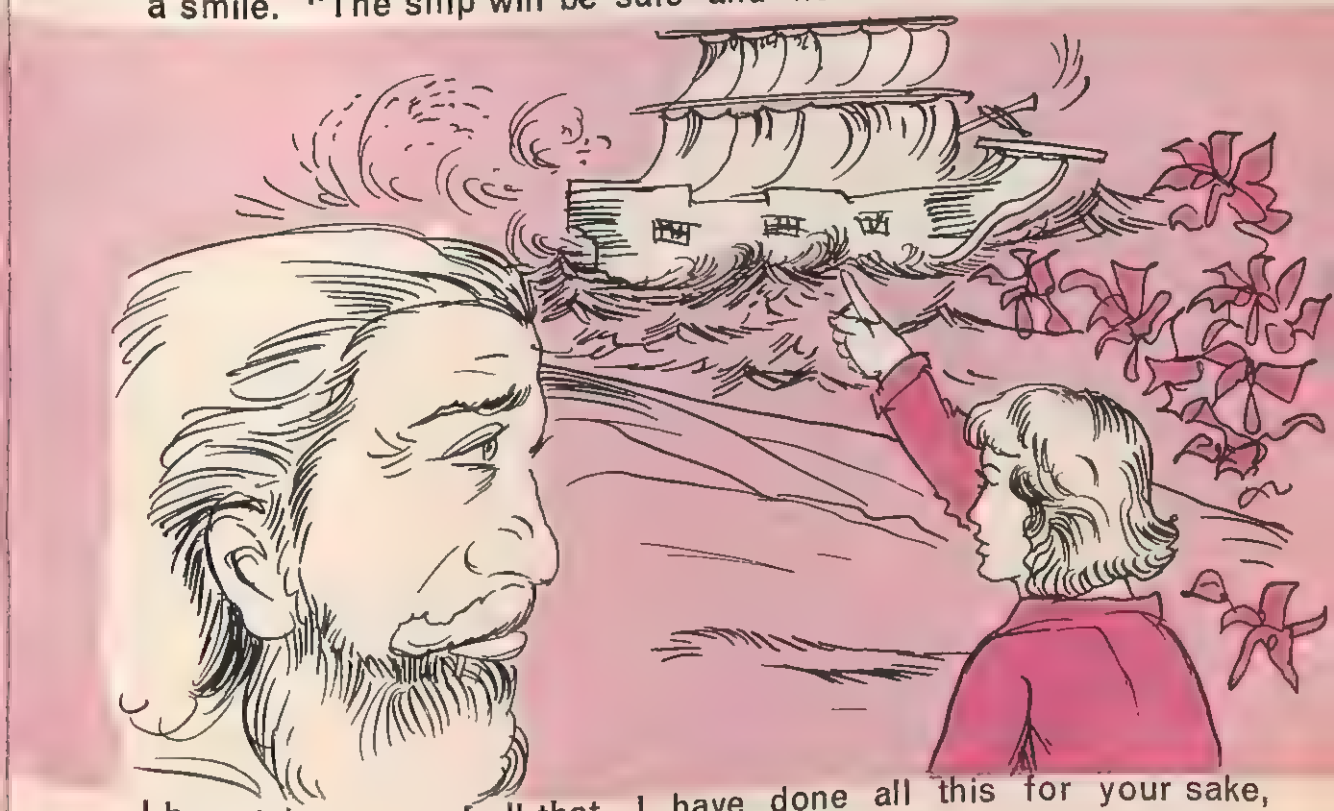
child of the witch Sycorax and Prospero had found him wandering in the woods after his mother's death. He had tried to teach the creature to speak and had been very kind to him, but it was all in vain. His mother's bad nature which he had inherited would not allow him to learn anything good or useful. Prospero then set him to do all the rough jobs like fetching wood, cleaning the rooms and cooking their food. Ariel had charge of him. Now, Ariel was invisible to all but Prospero, and whenever Caliban neglected his work;he would come sliyly and pinch him or trip up. Sometimes he changed himself into a hedgehog and lay in Caliban's way, making him tumble down.



Having these powerful spirits under control, Prospero could command the seas and the winds. One day Ariel brought the news that a ship carrying Antonio and the King of Naples was near the island. Prospero ordered Ariel and the other spirits to raise a violent storm. The waves rose high, tossing the ship about as if it was a toy. Prospero pointed out the fine large ship to his daughter.

"That vessel is full of human beings 'like ourselves', he told her. Miranda had been just three years old when she had come to the island and had never seen a human being other than her father. She was full of distress. "Dear Father, if you have raised this tempest by your magic powers, I beg you, have pity on those people. The ship will be dashed to pieces on the rocks, and they will all be killed. If I had the power, I would have sunk the sea below the earth rather than let that fine vessel be destroyed."

"Do not be unhappy, dear daughter," answered Prospero with a smile. "The ship will be safe and no one on board will die.

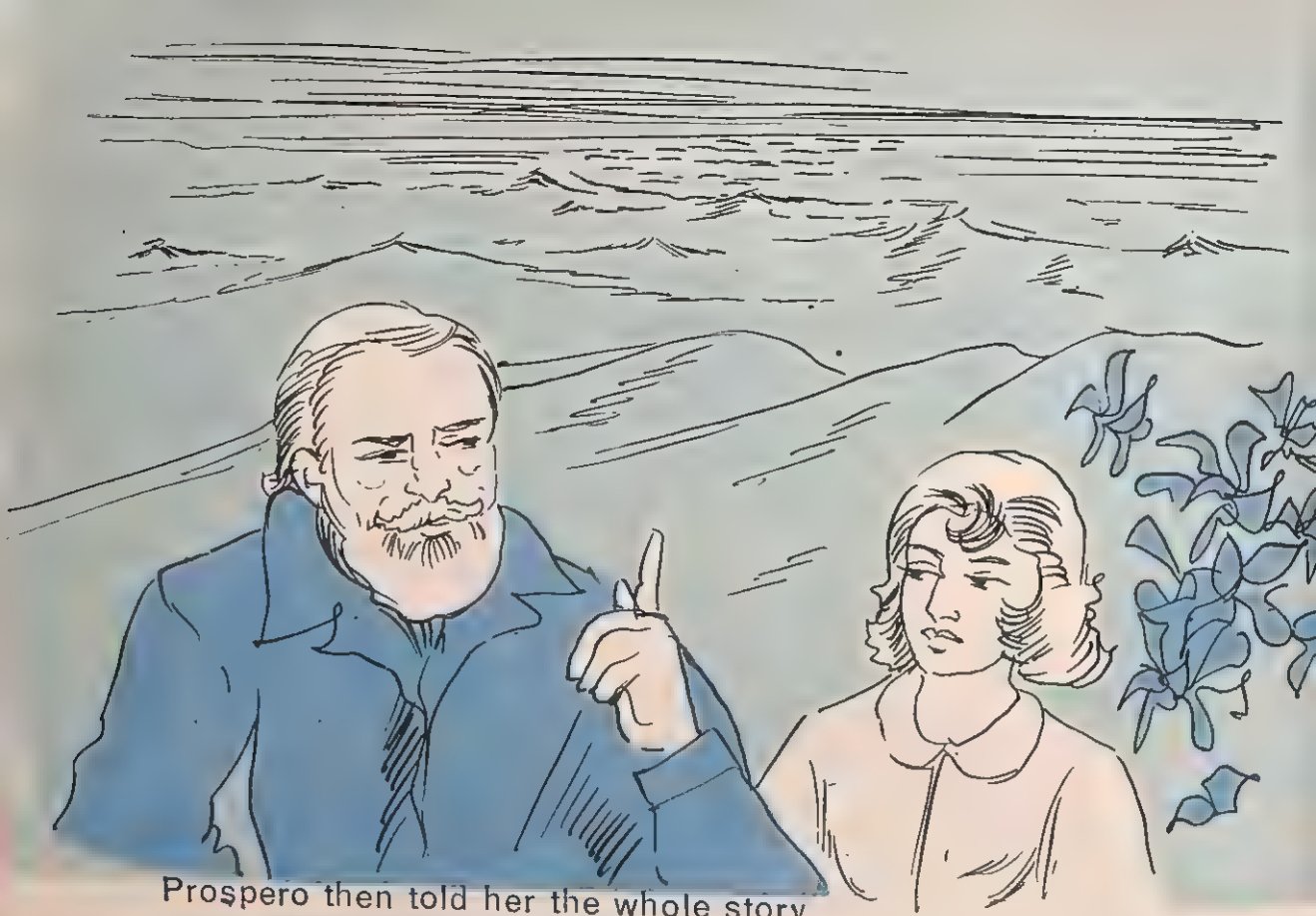


I have taken care of all that. I have done all this for your sake, Miranda. You know of no life but this.....this cave, and your father. Can you remember anything of your life before we came here ?"

I can't remember very clearly, but didn't I once have four or five women to look after me ?"

"Yes indeed," answered her father," and many more. Do you remember how we came here ?"

"No, Father," replied Miranda.



Prospero then told her the whole story.

"Oh, what a trouble I must have been to you, dear father," said Miranda softly.

"No, my dear. Your innocent smiles and pretty face gave me the courage to bear my misfortunes. That ship is bringing your uncle and the King of Naples as also the king's son. They will all soon land on this island."

EXERCISES

1. (a) Prospero was a good ruler then why did he allow Antonio to manage his state ?

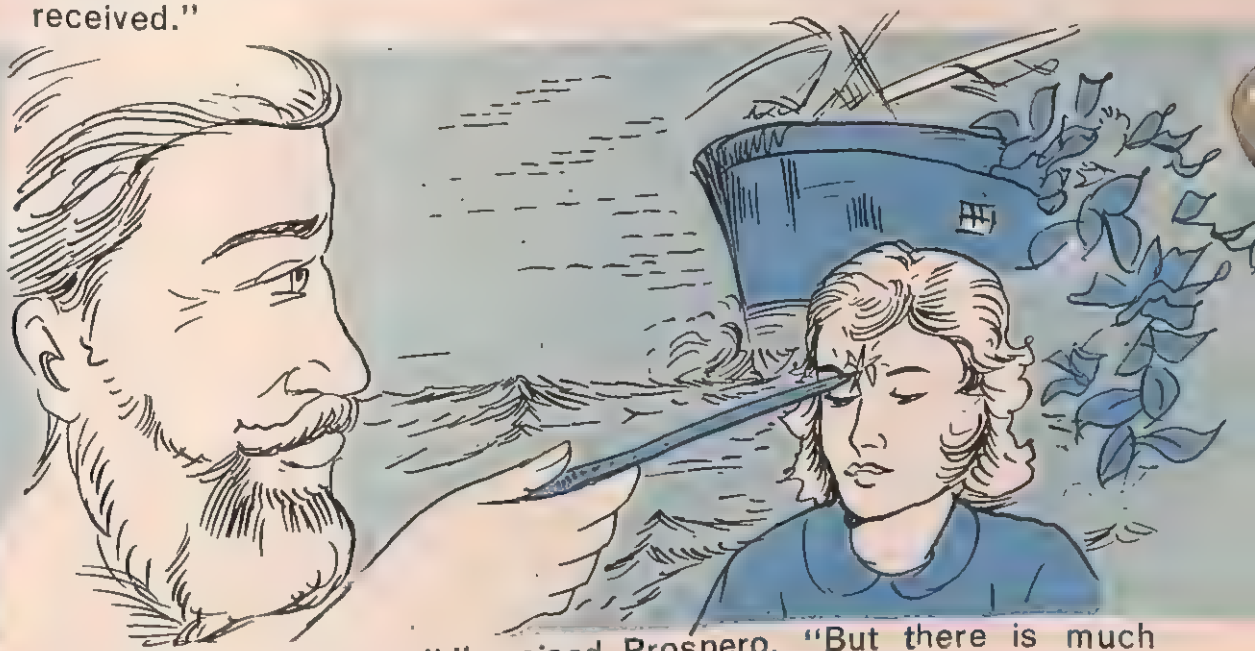
   (b)How did Antonio try to kill Prospero and his daughter ? Why did he not succeed ?
2. (a) Describe Ariel.

   (b) What did she enjoy doing the most ?
3. Why did Prospero order Ariel and the other spirits to raise a violent storm ?
4. What gave Prospero courage to bear his misfortunes when he came to the lonely island ?

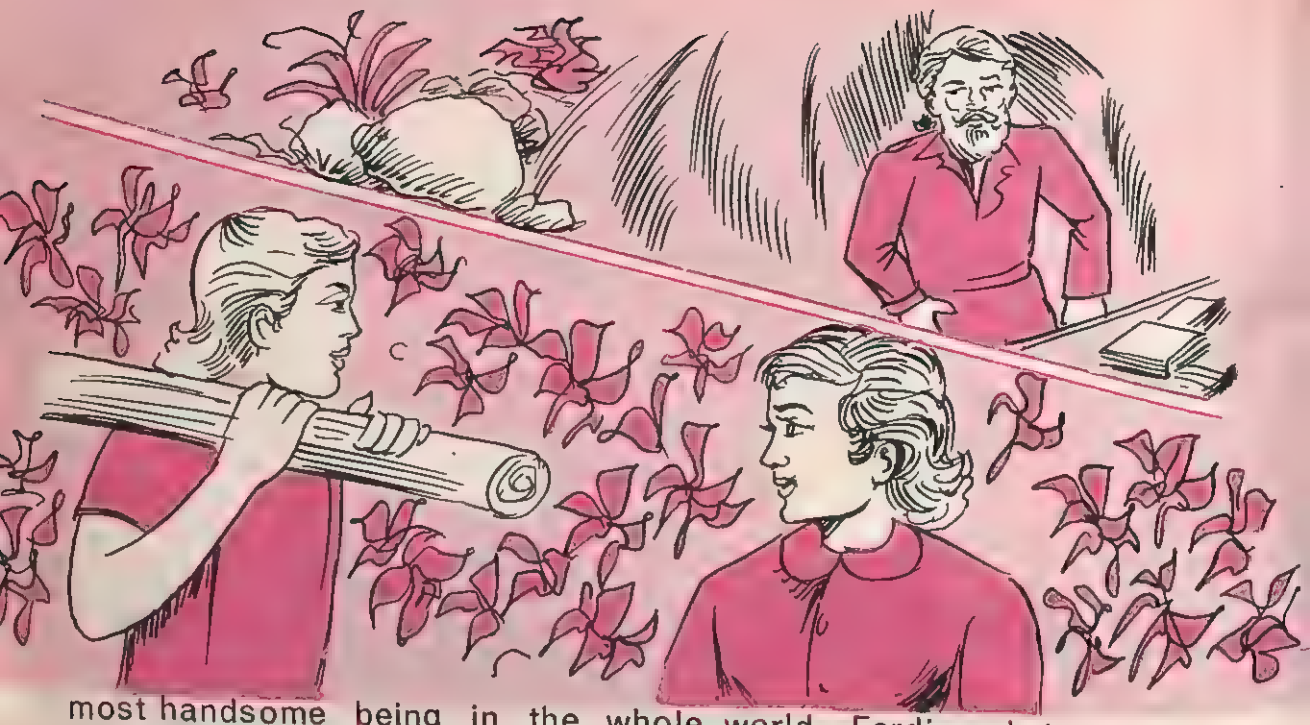
THE TEMPEST

PART II

Prospero touched his daughter lightly with his magic wand and she fell asleep. At that moment Ariel appeared before him. "I have obeyed all your orders, Master" he said. "All the men who were on that ship are now wandering in various parts of the island. Each one thinks he is the only survivor because I have taken care to separate all of them from one another. None of them is hurt. The prince is safe too, though heartbroken at the thought that his father is dead. Not a hair of his head is harmed, and if anything, his clothes look fresher for the soaking they have received."



"You have done well," praised Prospero. "But there is much more work to be done. Go now and bring Prince Ferdinand here. He and Miranda must see each other." Ariel flew off to do his bidding. He went to the rock under which the prince lay, mourning his father who he thought was dead. Ariel began singing in a sweet high voice and the prince looked up in surprise. He could not see anyone but followed the sound of the song. Soon he came to where Miranda sat with her father. She gazed at him in delighted surprise. She had imagined that all men were like her father, with grave faces and grey beards and she thought Ferdinand the



most handsome being in the whole world. Ferdinand too, was amazed to find such a beautiful girl on that deserted island, and thought her a goddess of that enchanted place. He greeted her as such. Miranda timidly answered that she was only a simple girl. At that moment Prospero appeared on the scene. He saw that the two young people liked each other very much but he wanted to find out just how strong their liking was. He pretended to be very angry with Ferdinand and by his magic forced him to follow him to the cave where he kept him imprisoned. Miranda held her father back. "Oh father, why are you so ungentle ? To me he seems a true man even if he is only the second man I have seen. Please release him for my sake."

But Prospero remained firm.

However he did not keep him shut up for long, and a little while later brought him out into the sunshine setting him to the hard task of piling up some heavy logs. A prince is not used to such hard work, and when a little later Miranda came there she found the young man almost dead with fatigue. "Oh do let me help you", she begged. "My father will be busy with his books for at least another three hours. Do please rest a little while."

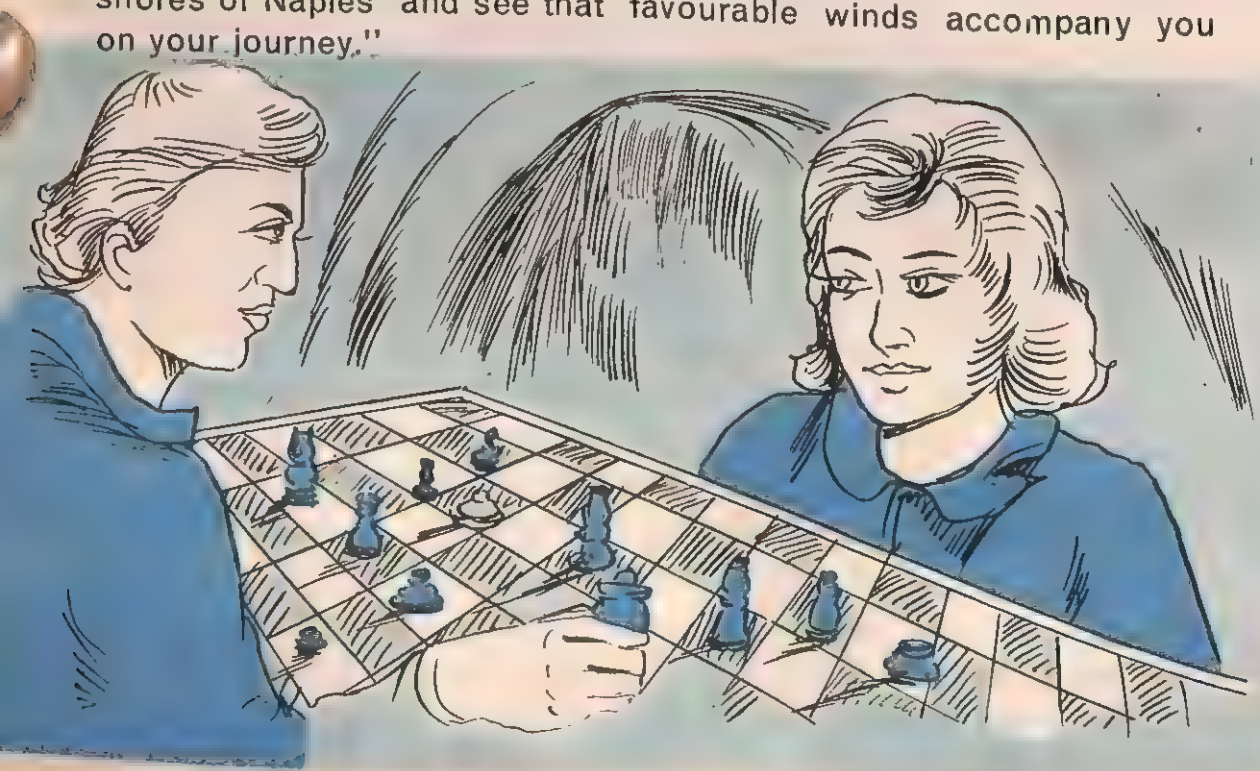
"Dear Lady, I dare not," answered Ferdinand. "I must finish my work before I rest."

Miranda remained there talking to him, and he got very little work done. Now, Prospero was not really with his books in the study. He had made himself invisible and was standing close to the two young people listening to their talk. Soon he was convinced that they truly loved each other. He made himself visible to them and gave them his blessings.

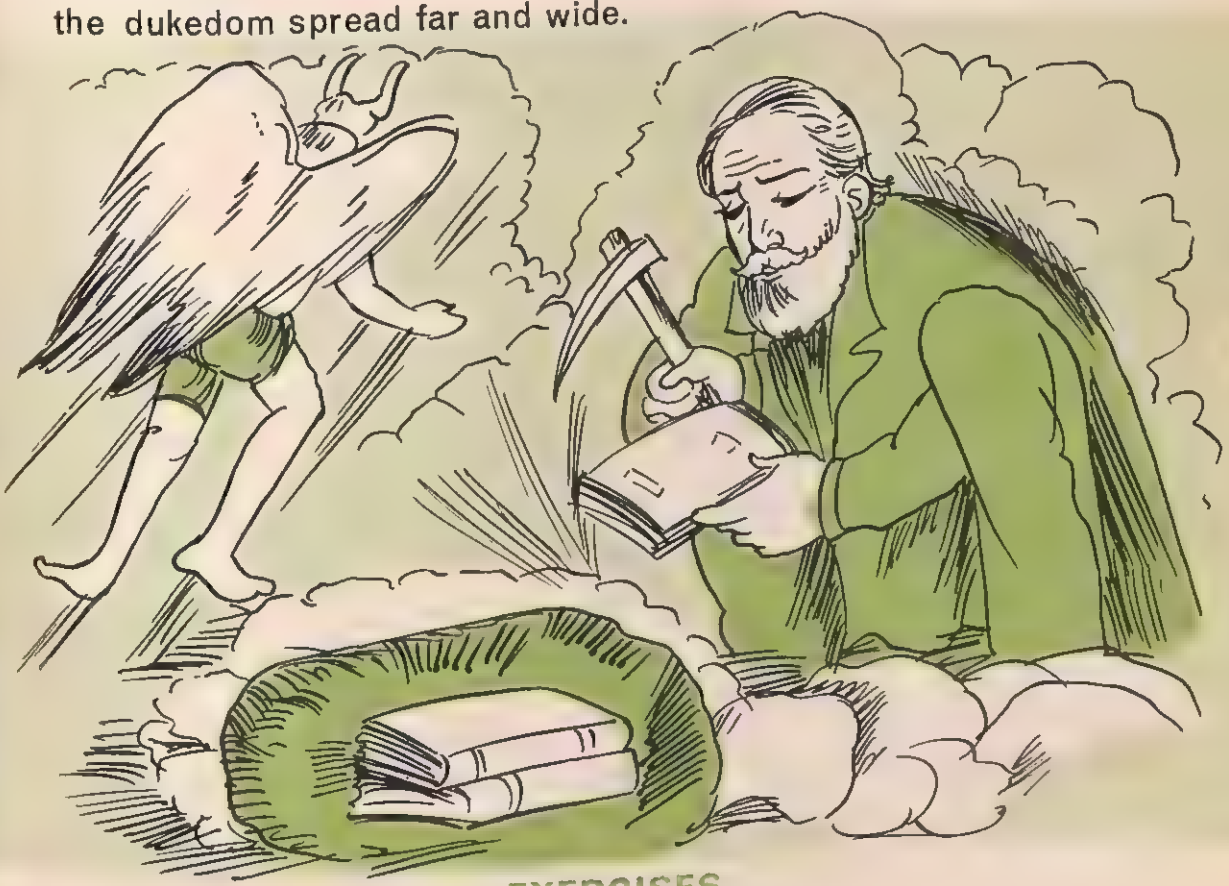
He then left them and ordered Ariel to lead his brother and the king of Naples to his cave. They came there very soon. They had been driven almost out of their senses by the strange and horrifying visions that Ariel had caused them to see. It took them a little while to recognise Prospero because grief and terror had dulled their senses. Prospero first made himself known to the faithful Gonzalo, calling him the preserver of his life. Then his brother and the king recognised him and begged his forgiveness with a sincerity which could not be doubted.

He led them to his cave and showed them Ferdinand and Miranda playing at chess . Father and son embraced each other with delight and gratitude. The king too, at first thought Miranda was a goddess. Ferdinand laughingly explained who she was and soon the happy group of people sat down to a meal cooked by Caliban. As they ate Prospero told them all that had happened to him since he had landed on the island. The king of Naples was delighted with the news that Ferdinand wanted to marry Miranda and that Prospero had given his consent. "I shall celebrate your wedding with great splendour as soon as we land at Naples", he said. They all sat talking till late in the night and went to sleep tired out but happy.

The next day Prospero called Ariel to him and released him from his service. "I am going to miss you, my little friend," he told the faithful spirit. "But I promised you your freedom and I shall keep my word. You have served me well and faithfully. You are now free to go where you like and live as you like". "Thank you, Master", answered Ariel. "I shall indeed lead a free life in future. But before I leave you finally I shall go with you to the shores of Naples and see that favourable winds accompany you on your journey."

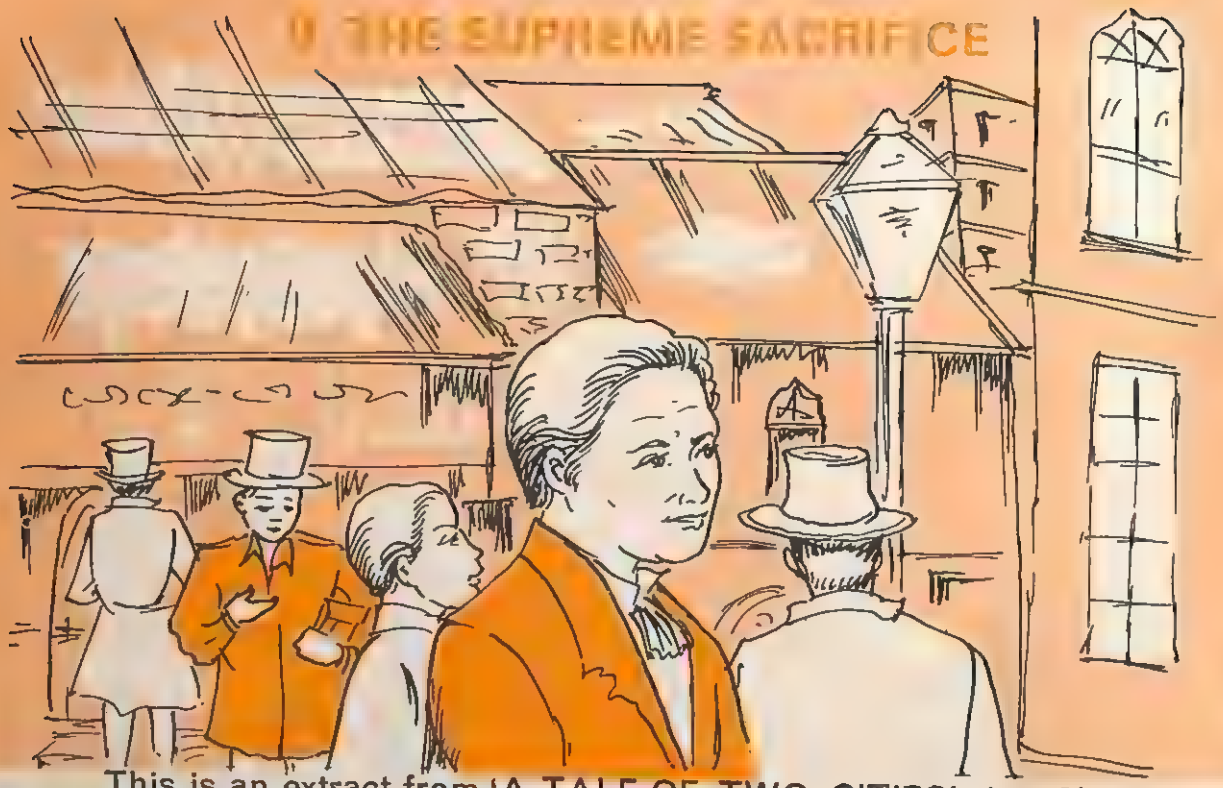


Prospero then collected his books on magic and buried them deep in the earth. He had decided never more to make use of his magic powers. The ship with the happy people on board soon reached Naples. The wedding of Ferdinand and Miranda was celebrated with great splendour. After the wedding Prospero returned to his beloved Milan where he ruled as before. He was happy and his people were happy, and the fame of the duke and the dukedom spread far and wide.



EXERCISES

1. 'Each one thinks he is the only survivor'. Why ?
2. (a) How did Ariel bring Prince Ferdinand to Miranda ?
   (b) Why was Miranda pleasantly surprised to see Prince Ferdinand ?
3. (a) What did Prospero ask Ferdinand to do out in the sunshine ?
   (b) Did Ferdinand enjoy doing this work ?
   (c) What did Miranda do ?
   (d) Where was Prospero ? What was he convinced of ?
4. Prospero released Ariel from his service ? What did Ariel decide to do ?



This is an extract from 'A TALE OF TWO CITIES' by Charles Dickens, a story set in the days of the French Revolution, that is in the eighteenth century.

Charles Darnay, a French aristocrat, renounced all claims to his title of Marquis of Evere'monde and to his lands in France and lived with his wife Lucy and daughter in England. Madam Defarge, a revolutionary, had sworn to destroy all members of the Evere'monde family because the late Marquis had destroyed her entire family. She caused Darnay to be imprisoned and sentenced to be guillotined. Let's find out if Charles Darnay who is dearly loved by his wife and daughter and friends is guillotined.

PART I

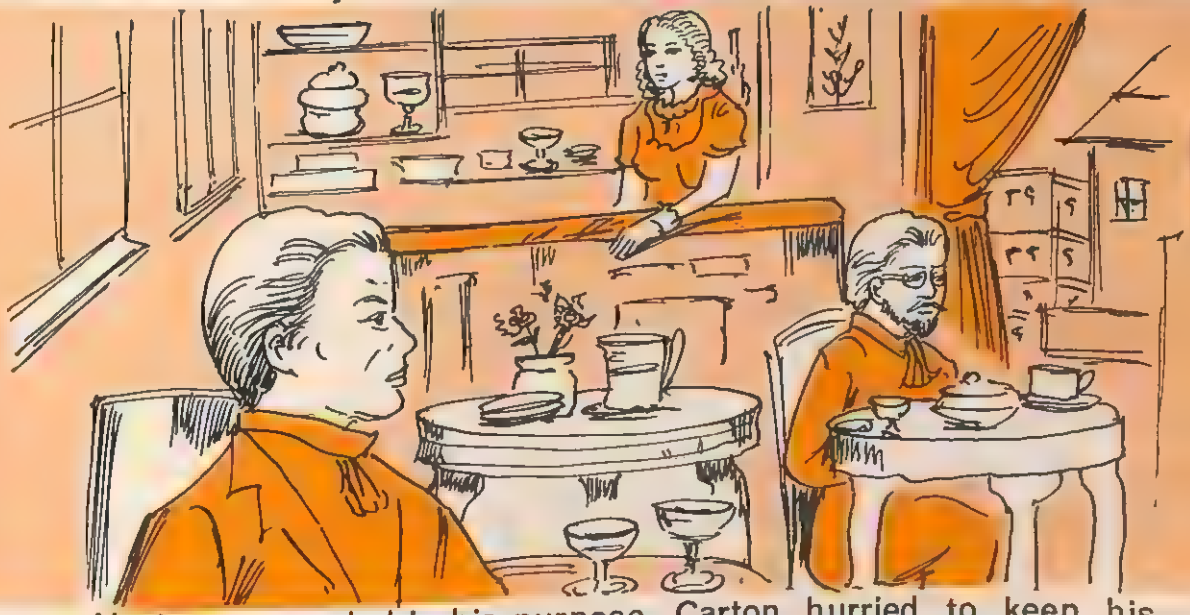
Sidney Carton paused in the street not quite decided where to go. "I must be at the bank at nine," he said, "will it be a good thing, in the meantime, to show myself ? I think so. It is best that these people know that there is a man like me here—one who looks so much like the condemned, Darnay. It is a sound precaution and may be a necessary preparation."

He then made his way to Defarge's wine shop. He sat down at one of the tables and ordered a glass of wine. He noticed Madam Defarge's startled look as she saw his face. He could have been Charles Darnay's twin brother. She brought the wine to him and began a conversation.

"English ?" she asked him.

Carton answered in strongly accented French "Yes madame, yes. I am English."

She went back to her friends and he heard her say, "I swear to you, like Evere'monde." One by one her husband and his friends came up to Carton on one excuse or the other to see for themselves how closely he resembled Darnay.



Having succeeded in his purpose, Carton hurried to keep his appointment with Mr. Lorry, an officer of an English Bank and a very close friend of the Darnay family.

He found Mr. Lorry walking up and down the room, his face full of anxiety. "Dr. Manette went out at 4 o'clock and isn't back yet," he told Carton. "Lucy still thinks his influence will obtain Charles' release from prison, but I am doubtful. It's getting late and I mustn't leave Lucy and the child alone for too long. What can I do ?" "Why don't you go back to her ? I'll wait here for Dr. Manette" offered Carton.

Long hours passed. Mr. Lorry came back and the two men waited together. After a long time they heard him on the stairs and looked up with hopeful faces as he entered the room. One look was enough to tell them that all hope was lost. Dr. Manette had lost his reason. The shock of finding he could not help his son-in-law had been too much for him.

Sidney Carton was the first to speak :

"The last chance is gone. It was not much. You must take him to his daughter. But before you go, will you, for a moment, listen very attentively to me ? Don't ask me why I make the conditions I am going to make, or make you promise me certain things. I have a reason — a good one."

"I do not doubt it," answered Mr. Lorry "I'm listening". Carton bent to pick up Dr. Manette's coat, a small case fell from it to the floor. He picked it up and found a folded paper in it. He opened it and exclaimed; "Thank God", "What is it ?" asked Mr. Lorry eagerly. "Just a moment" said Carton. He took another piece of paper from his coat pocket and handed it to Mr. Lorry. "That is the certificate which enables me to go out of this city. Look at it you see what it says — Sidney Carton, an Englishman ?" Mr. Lorry nodded. "Keep it for me till tomorrow. I don't want to take it with me to the prison when I go to meet Darnay".

"Why not ?" asked Mr. Lorry.

"I prefer not to do so", said Carton. "Now this paper which fell out of Dr. Manette's coat is a similar permit for him, his daughter and her child at any time to cross the barrier and the frontier.

"At any moment the authorities may ask for this paper".

"They are not in danger ?"asked Mr. Lorry in alarm.

"They are in great danger"; replied Carton.

Madam Defarge's words this evening confirmed that they are in great danger. I met a friend who gave me some information too. Nobody will come to arrest them for another two or three days, may be even a week. Now, you have money and can hire a carriage to take you to the coast as quickly as the journey can be made. Early tomorrow morning have the horses ready so that they can start at 2 o' clock in the afternoon. "Now, tell her (he did not mention Lucie's name) about the great danger to her father and child and insist that for their sake she must leave Paris. Tell her that more depends on it than she dare believe or hope. Be ready in every way so that the moment I join you, you can drive away." "Do I wait for you whatever happens ?" asked Mr. Lorry. "You have my certificate with you with the rest, you know, and can reserve my place. Wait for nothing but my arrangement and then for England!"

"Why then, I'll have a young, strong man to help me during the journey!" said Mr. Lorry. "With Heaven's help you shall!" answered Carton. "Promise me solemnly that nothing will make you change the plans we have just made."

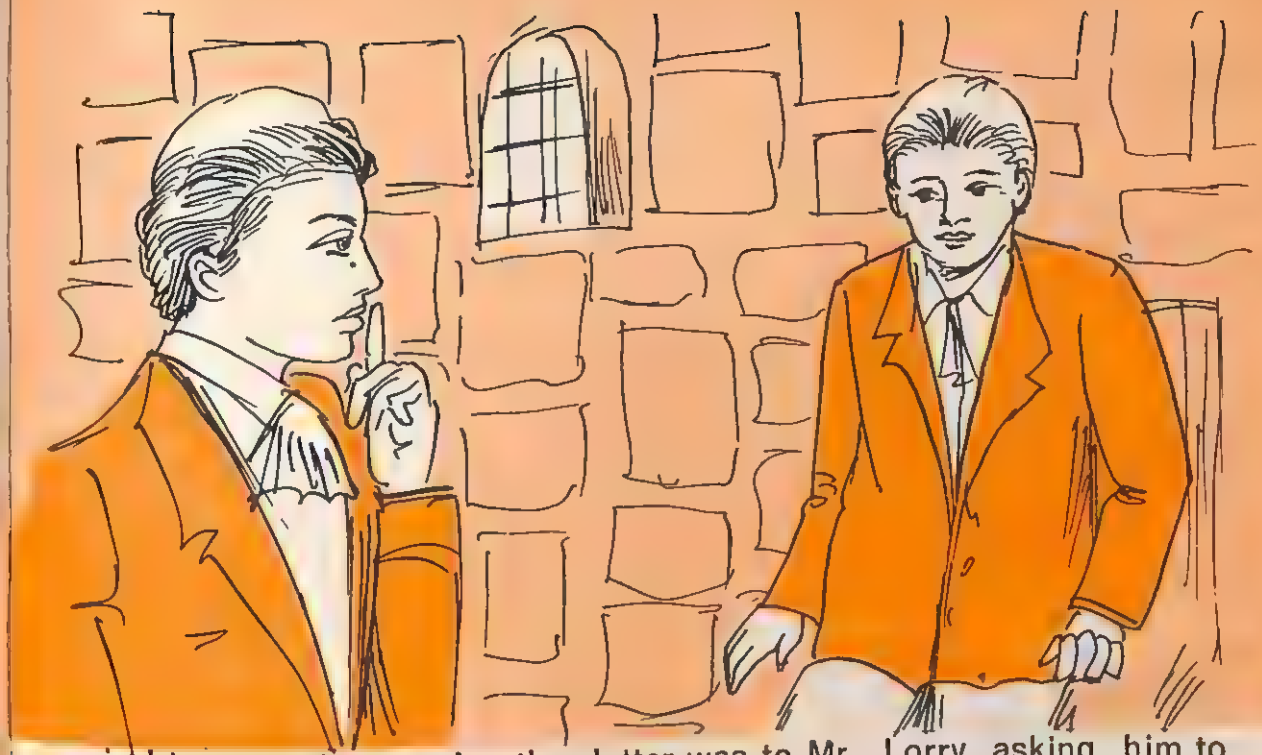
"Nothing, Carton" answered Mr. Lorry firmly.

"Remember these words tomorrow. If you change our plans many lives will be sacrificed."

"I will remember them. Now, good - bye."

Carton and Mr. Lorry then took Dr. Manette to the house where his daughter was waiting. Carton said a silent and last farewell to the lady and child he loved so much.

In the black prison those doomed to the guillotine waited to be called. Charles Darnay waited in his cell, like the others. He had had hopes of being saved when he first came there, but gradually realised that he would die. The thought of being parted for ever from his beloved wife and child broke his heart. But as the days went by, he gradually calmed down. He was allowed to buy paper and ink and pen and he wrote a long letter to Lucie. He wrote another to Dr. Manette saying he was leaving Lucie and their child



in his special care. Another letter was to Mr. Lorry asking him to look after all of them. His mind was so full of others he did not think of Carton even once.

Then he settled down to wait. He counted the minutes that passed and heard the clock striking the hour. He knew that at two o' clock he would be called from his cell. Far away he heard the clock striking one. Footsteps sounded in the stone passage outside. The key was put in the lock, and turned. A voice said in English. "He has never seen me here. I'll wait. Go in alone. Lose no time."

The door opened and closed quickly. Charles looked up in amazement to see Carton standing there, smiling, with a finger to his lips in a warning gesture. "You didn't expect to see me, did you ?"

"I cannot believe it is you." stammered Charles. "You are not" — his voice grew sharp with fear — "a prisoner ?"

"No, a lucky chance has given me power over one of the keepers here and that's how I am here. I come from her — your wife, dear Darnay."

Charles clutched Carton's hand, wordlessly. "I bring you a request from her."

"What is it ?"

"A plea. Now, you have no time to ask me why I bring it or what it means. I have no time to tell it. Take off those boots you wear, and wear mine."

Carton pushed Charles into a chair stand and stood near him barefoot.

"Carton, there's no escape from this place. You will only die with me. This is madness," said Charles.

Carton only smiled. "I'm not asking you to escape. Take off that cravat and wear mine. While you do it, let me take this ribbon from your hair and shake out your hair like mine.

Quickly and with surprising strength Carton forced Charles to make all the changes. The prisoner was like a young child in his hands.

"Carton. Dear Carton. It is madness. It can never be done. I beg you not to add your death to mine."

"Do I ask you, dear Darnay, to walk out of this door ? When I ask you that, refuse it. I see you have pen and ink and paper. Write the letter I'm going to dictate to you."

"To whom do I address it ?" asked Charles.

"To no one."

"Do I date it ?"

"No."

The prisoner looked up at each question. Carton began dictating. He had his hand inside his breast. Slowly he began drawing it out. Everytime the prisoner looked up, the hand stopped, closing on something.

"Have you written that ?" asked Carton.

"I have. Is that a weapon in your hand ?" asked Charles.

"No I am not armed."

"What is in your hand ?"

"You shall know very soon. Now continue," and he went on dictating. As he talked, his eyes fixed on the writer, his hand slowly and softly moved down, close to his friend's face.

The pen dropped from Darnay s hand to the table and he looked around with a vague expression.

"What vapour is that ?" he asked.

"Vapour ?"

"Something that passed me."

"There's nothing. Pick up that pen and finish. Hurry ! Hurry !"

With an effort Darnay continued to write. His breathing changed and he looked up at Carton with clouded eyes. Carton, his hand again in his breast, looked steadily at him "Hurry ! Hurry!" Charles bent over the paper. Carton's hand was again stealing down carefully and softly. Charles raised his head and suddenly sprang up with a reproachful look, but Carton's hand was pressed against his nostrils, and his left arm caught him round the waist. For a few seconds Charles struggled weakly with the man who had come to lay down his life for him. But within a minute or two he lay unconscious on the floor. Quickly Carton dressed himself in the clothes of the prisoner, combed back his hair, and tied it with the ribbon the prisoner had worn. Then he called softly "Enter. Come in" and a man came in.

Carton pointed to Charles. "Look at him. Now tell me, is it too dangerous ?"

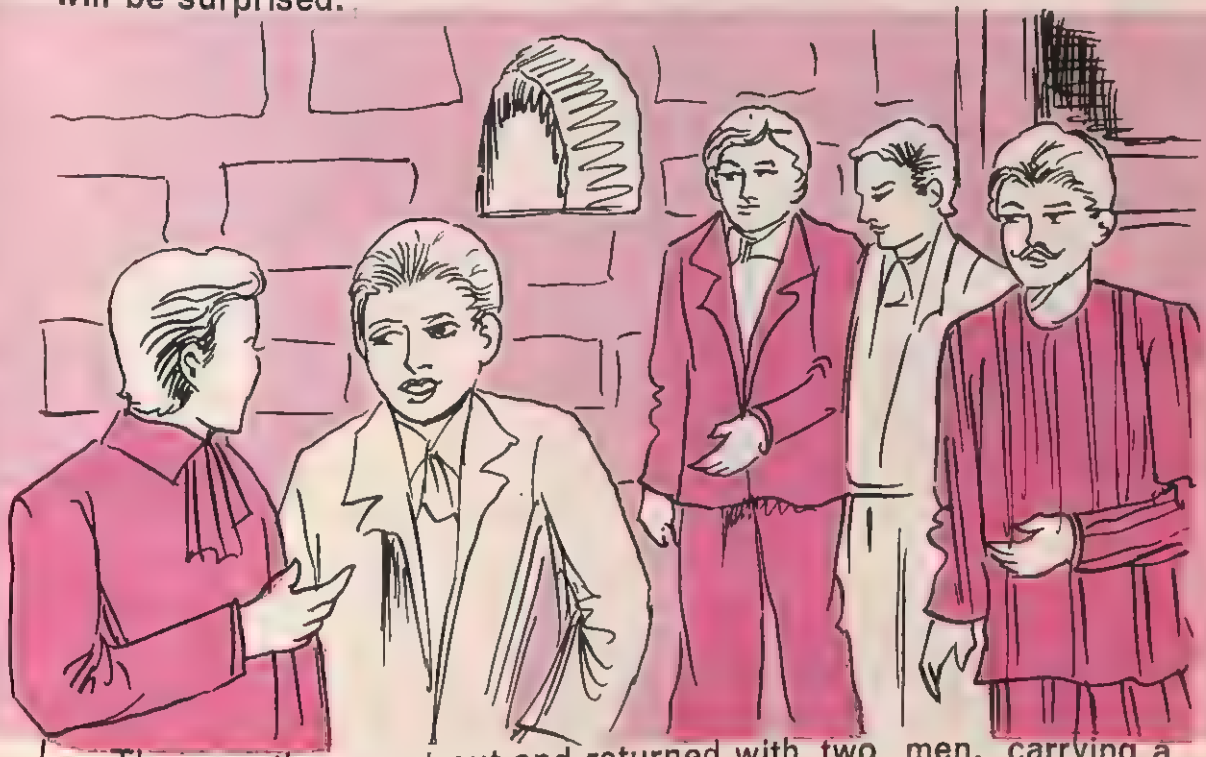
"Not if you keep to your bargain" answered the man.

"I shall be true to death", answered Carton.

"Now get some help and take me to the coach."

"You ?" asked the man nervously.

"Him, man with whom I've changed places. Go out at the gate by which we came in. I pretended to be weak and faint when I came in. Pretend that the parting interview was too much for me and I have collapsed. Such things have happened here often and no one will be surprised."



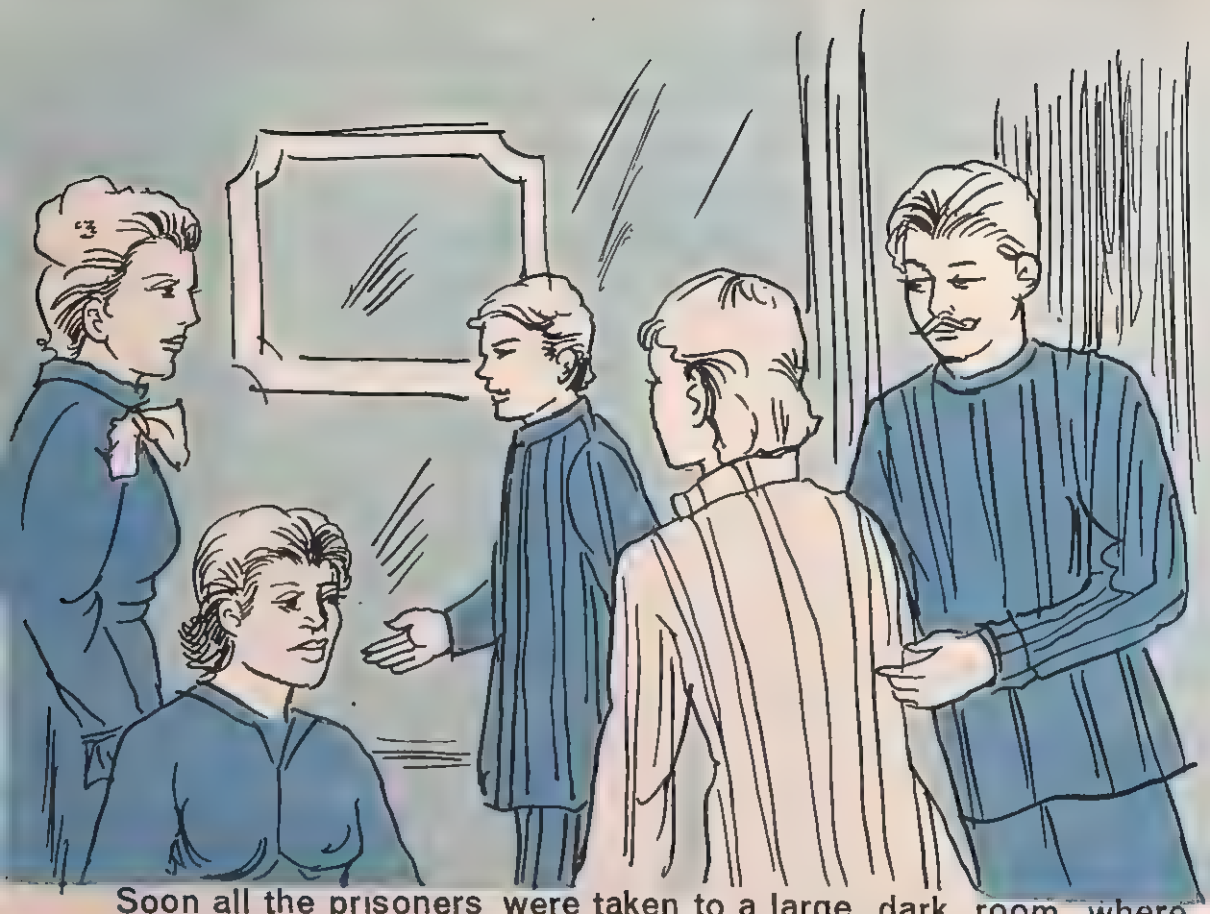
The man then went out and returned with two men, carrying a litter.

"How about that ! " exclaimed one of them.

"Too grieved to find Sainte Guillotine has claimed his friend ?"

The two men placed the unconscious figure on the litter and bent to carry it away. "The time is short, Evéremonde", said the man to Carton.

"I know it well," said Carton, "Take care of my friend, I beg you and leave me alone." The men left with Charles Darnay and Sidney Carton sat back to wait.



Soon all the prisoners were taken to a large dark room where they waited for the carts to take them to the Guillotine. While they waited a young woman, with a slender girlish figure, and a sweet thin face, came up to Sidney Carton.

"Citizen Evere'monde," she said, touching him with her cold hand. "I am a poor little seamstress, who was with you in Law-force."

"I remember you," murmured Carton.

"I am not afraid to die, but I have done nothing. If I ride with you, may I hold your hand ? It will give me more courage." As she lifted her eyes to his, he saw a sudden doubt in them—then astonishment. He pressed her thin fingers and touched his lips.

"Are you dying for him ?" she asked.

"And his wife and child. Hush, Yes."

"O, will you let me hold your brave hand, stranger ?"

"Hush ! Yes, my poor sister, to the last."

EXERCISES

Part I

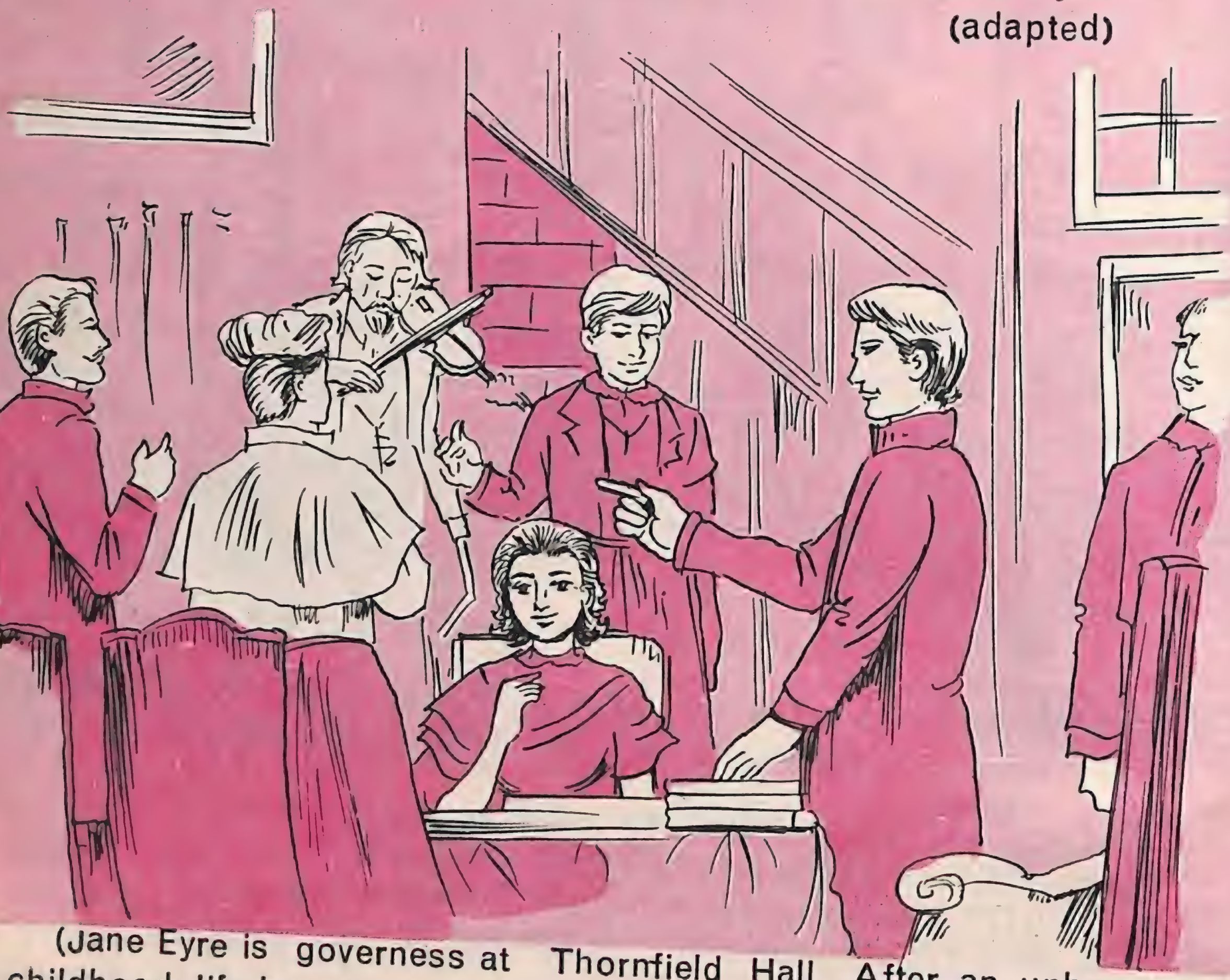
1. Why did Carton go to Defarge's wine-shop ? Did he succeed in his purpose ?
2. Dr. Manette returned after a long time. What did Mr. Lorry and Carton realize had happened ? Why, do you think, this had happened to Dr. Manette ?
3. (a) What paper did Sidney Carton give Mr. Lorry ?
   (b) What had fallen from Dr. Manette's pocket ?
   (c) What did Carton ask Mr. Lorry to do the next morning ?
4. Who did Carton love a lot ? 'He bade them a silent farewell.' Why do you think he did not talk to them.

Part II

1. What were Charles Darnay's feelings when he saw Carton in his cell ?
2. Carton's dress and hair-style was different from Darnay's. What changes did he effect in Darnay's appearance ?
3. How did Charles Darnay become unconscious ? Why, do you think, Carton made him unconscious ?
4. How was Darnay taken out of the prison ? What did the guards think had happened to Darnay ?
5. What was the request of the seamstress ? Why did she make this request ?
6. (a) "Will you let me hold your brave hand ?" Why did she consider Carton brave ?
   (b) Why had Carton made the supreme sacrifice ?

10. THE MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE

Jane Eyre
(adapted)



(Jane Eyre is governess at Thornfield Hall. After an unhappy childhood, life has become very pleasant and comfortable for her and she is happy for almost the first time in her life. Her employer, Mr. Rochester enjoys her company and conversation and she comes to love him dearly. Mr. Rochester brings several of his friends home for a few days and the house is full of laughter, music and games. One day Mr. Rochester pretends to go away on business but returns disguised as a fortune-teller. One by one the guests are called in and he tells their fortune. Finally Jane is called in, but before he completes telling her fortune,she discovers that he is her employer. He then starts talking to her. The rest of this extract from Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte is in Jane's own words).

"Sit down Jane. Tell me what the others are doing."

"Discussing the gipsy, I think", said Jane. "Tell me what they said about me;" he said. "It's getting late, sir. It's almost eleven. Oh, are you aware, Mr. Rochester, that a stranger has arrived, asking for you ?"

"A stranger ! No, who can it be ? I expected no one. Has he left ?"

"No, he said he had known you a long time, and that he would wait till you returned. He has travelled a long distance specially to see you."

"Did he give his name ?"

"His name is Mason, sir; and he comes from the West Indies, I think."

Mr. Rochester had taken my hand to lead me to a chair.

As I spoke he gave my wrist a painful grip. The smile froze on his lips. He gave a gasp.

"Mason; The West Indies;" he stammered.

"Mason; The West Indies!" he repeated. His face grew white.

He hardly seemed to know what he was doing.

"Do you feel ill, Sir ?" I asked.

"Jane, I've got a blow. I've got a blow, Jane." He staggered.

"Oh, lean on me, sir"

He sat down and made me sit down next to him. He gazed at me with a troubled look.

"Can I help you, sir ?" I asked.

"Fetch me a glass of wine from the dining room," he said. "And tell me if Mason is there and what he is doing."

I did as he asked, and told him they were all talking and laughing, including Mr. Mason.

"Jane, if all those people turned against me what would you do ?"

"Turn them out of the room, sir, if I could."

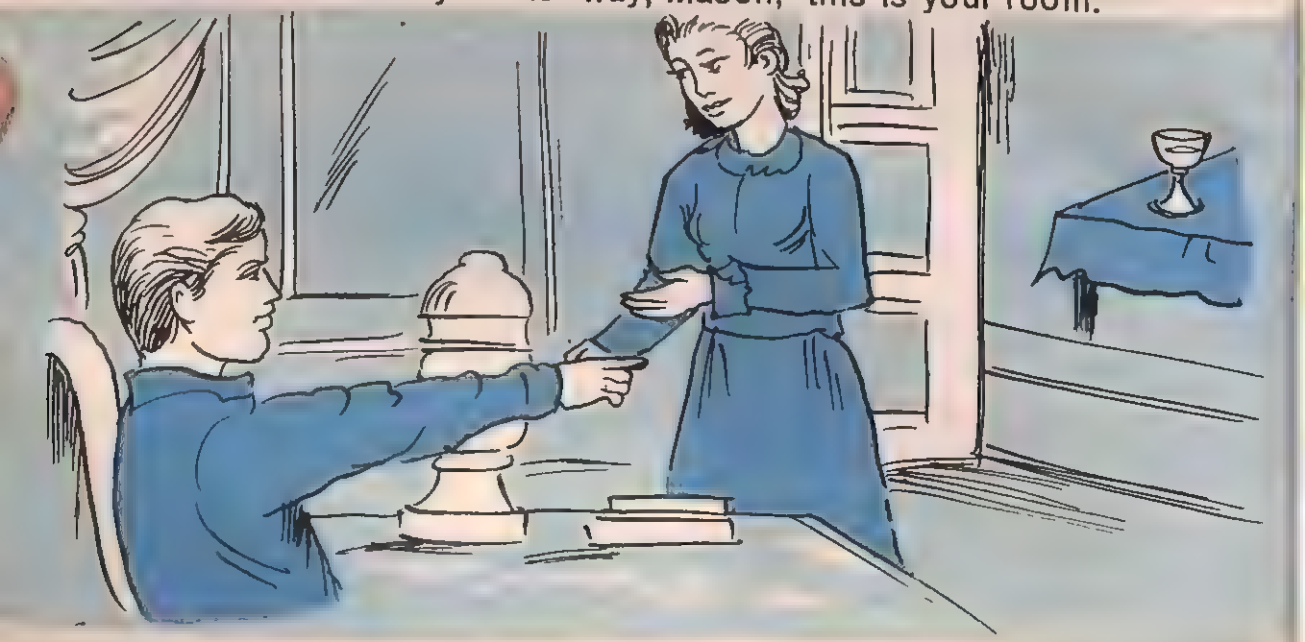
"Would you go with them ?"

"No, sir. I would have more pleasure in staying with you."

"To comfort me ?"

"Yes, sir, to comfort you as well as I could."

"Go back to the room now. Step quietly up to Mason and say I'm back and wish to see him. Show him in here and then leave us." I did as he asked. After I had gone to bed, I heard Mr. Rochester's voice say "This way, Mason; this is your room."



He spoke cheerfully. His gay tone set me at ease. I fell asleep.

I had forgotten to draw my curtains and the brightness of the full moon shining in at the window straight into my face woke me up. I half rose to draw the curtains, when I heard a scream. Good God! What a cry!

The silence of the night was broken by a savage, sharp cry; a shrill sound that could be heard from one end of Thornfield Hall to the other. My pulse stopped, my heart stood still, my arm remained stretched towards the curtains. The cry died, and was not repeated.

It had come from the room above me. And now I heard the sounds of a struggle in that same room. Suddenly a half smothered sound broke out. "Help! Help! Help!" three times rapidly. "Will no one come ?" it cried. And then I heard it say "Rochester! Rochester! for God's sake, come!"

A door opened. Someone rushed along the corridor. Another step stamped on the floor above and something fell. Then there was silence. I dressed myself with shaking fingers and came out of my room. The guests were coming out of their rooms too, all exclaiming in fear and anxiety.

"Oh, what is it ?" "Who is hurt ?" "Is it a fire ?" They ran here and there. Some sobbed, others stumbled in the dark.

Into this confusion came Mr. Rochester. He soon calmed them down. "There's nothing to worry about," he said. "A servant has had a nightmare, that's all. Let me see you back to your rooms." He soon restored order.

I went back to my room but not to sleep. I knew no one else could have heard the sounds upstairs or the words. It was something more than a servant's nightmare. I sat down and waited. Soon there came the knock I expected.

"Are you up ?" asked Mr. Rochester's voice.

"Yes, sir".

"And dressed ?"

"Yes, sir"

"Then, come out quietly." I obeyed.

"Come this way. Take your time and don't make a noise."

We went upstairs and stood in the dark, low corridor.

"Have you a sponge in your room ?", he asked in a whisper. "Any volatile salts ?"

"Yes, sir,"

"Go back and fetch them both."

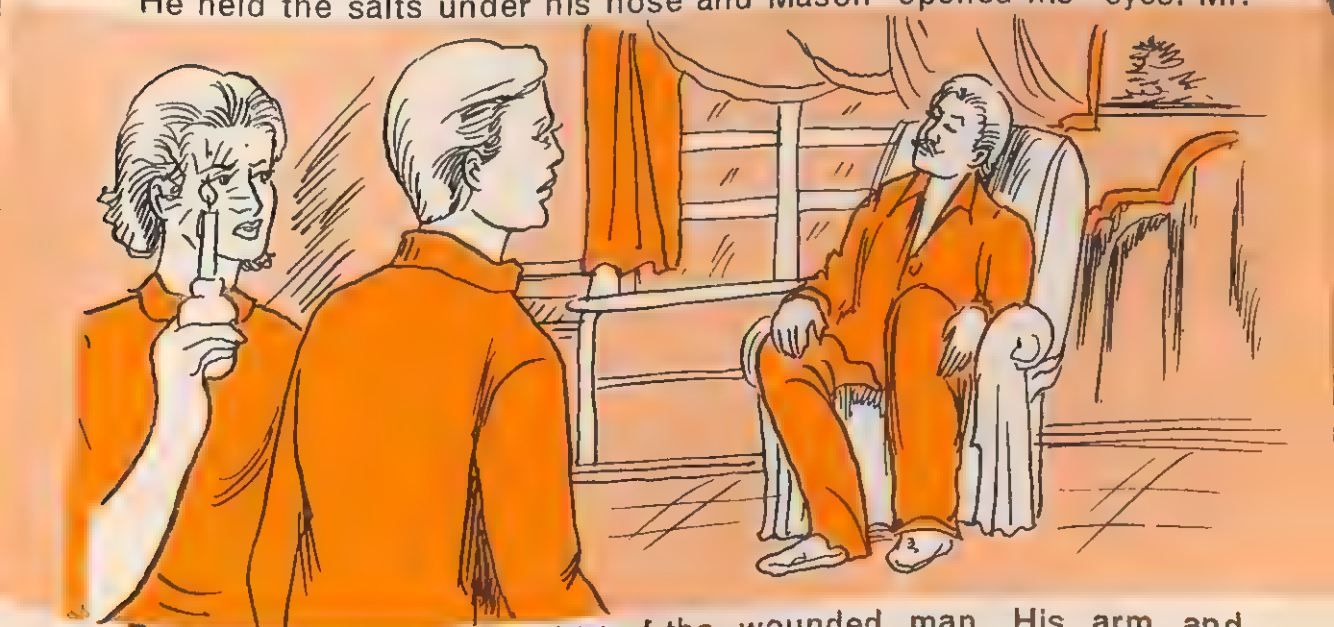
I went to my room and returned with the things he wanted.

"You don't turn sick at the sight of blood ?"

"I don't think I shall". I answered. "I've never been tried yet." I felt no coldness or faintness when I answered him, only a thrill.

"I can't risk a fainting fit" he felt my hand. "Warm and steady," he said.

He unlocked a room and we went in. I had been in this room before but now a curtain I had seen earlier was thrown back and I saw there was a door behind it. It was open and I heard a snarling, sound, almost like a dog quarrelling. Mr. Rochester put down his candle. "Wait a minute," he said and went to the inner room. A shout of laughter greeted his entrance. He spoke in a low voice and heard another low voice answer him. He came out and took me round to the other side of a bed. An easy chair stood near the bed. A man sat in it. He was motionless. He was leaning back with his eyes closed. I recognised in the pale and seemingly lifeless face the stranger Mason. I saw too, that one side of his shirt and one arm was almost soaked in blood. "Hold the candle," said Mr. Rochester, and I took it. He fetched a basin of water and I held that too. He took a sponge and gently began to wipe Mason's face. He held the salts under his nose and Mason opened his eyes. Mr.



Rochester opened the shirt of the wounded man. His arm and shoulder were bandaged. He sponged away blood which was trickling down fast. "Is there immediate danger?" murmured Mr. Mason.

"Pooh! It's a mere scratch. Don't be so weak, man; bear up!" said Mr. Rochester. "I'll bring a surgeon to you myself and by morning you'll be able to be moved, I hope". "Jane!" he added turning to me.

"Yes, sir," I stepped forward.

"I shall have to leave you in this room with this gentleman for an hour, perhaps two hours. Sponge away the blood as I did now when it returns. If he feels faint, give him a drink of water. You will not speak to him on any pretext and, Richard, it will be at the peril of your life if you speak to her."

Again the poor man groaned. He looked as if he dared not move. Mr. Rochester watched him a second, then looked at me and said, "Remember! No conversation." I heard the key in the lock and then his footsteps going down the stairs.

PART II

I sat silently near the wounded man, thinking over the evening's happenings. I was terrified in case the snarling creature from the inner room burst in on me. What was it that could neither be thrown out nor controlled by the owner ?

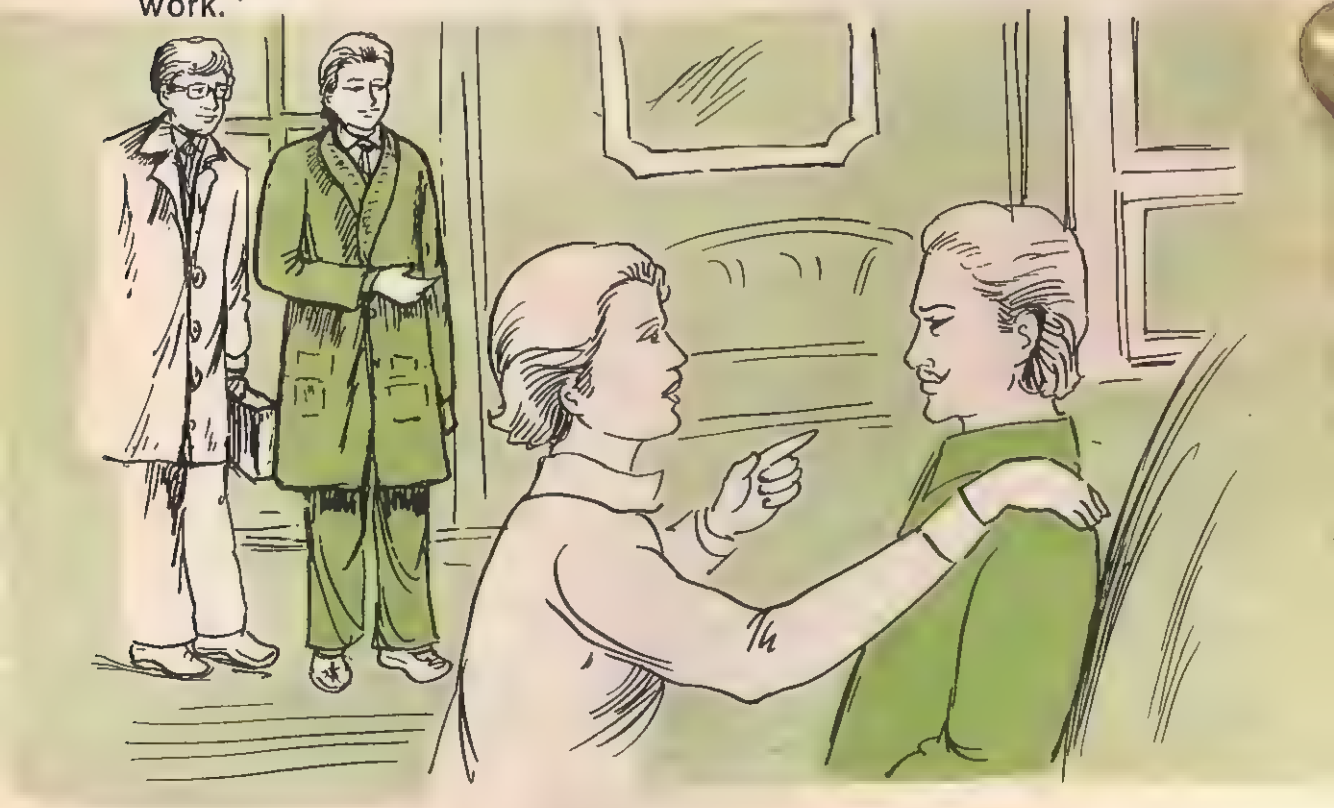
And this wounded man. How had he become involved in this net of horror ? Why had that creature attacked him ? What had made him come up here at a time when he should have been fast asleep in his bed ? I saw that Mr. Mason was submissive towards Mr. Rochester. Then why had Mr. Rochester been so agitated on hearing of his arrival ? I could not forget his look and his paleness as he whispered "Jane, I have got a blow, I have got a blow, Jane." His arm had trembled as it rested on my shoulder.

"When will he come? When will he come ?" I cried to myself. I nursed Mr. Mason throughout the night. I sponged the blood away, gave him water and held my salts under his nose. I began to get worried. He looked so pale and weak. At last, as dawn broke out, I heard Mr. Rochester return. The surgeon was with him.

"Now Carter be quick," he told the doctor. "I give you half an hour to dress his wounds and get him ready to go down stairs."

"But is he fit to move, sir ?"

"Oh yes. It is nothing serious. He is nervous. Now, set to work."



Then he turned to Mason. "Now, my good fellow, how are you"

"She has finished me, I fear" was the reply.

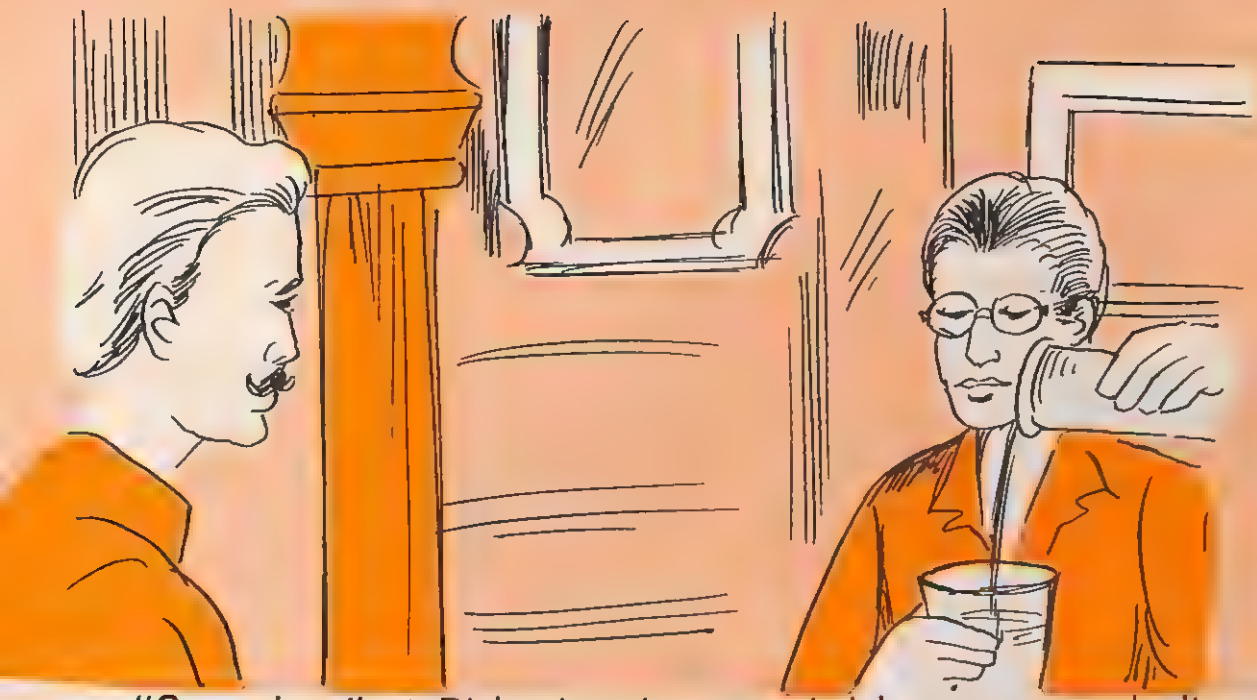
"Not a bit-courage ! You're in no danger at all. Carter, assure him of this."

"I can do that with a clear conscience", replied the surgeon. "I only wish I could have got here sooner. You would not have lost so much blood." Then in an altered tone. "What's this ?" The flesh is torn here. This wound was not made by a knife alone. There are teeth marks as well."

"She bit me", whispered Mason. "She worried me like a tigress when Rochester got the knife from her. Oh, it was frightful !" he shuddered. "I warned you," said Mr. Rochester. "I told you to be on your guard when you go near her. You should have waited till

tomorrow when I could have gone with you. Not gone tonight". "I thought I might do some good" said Mason. "You were wrong. However, you've suffered enough and been punished for not taking my advice, so I wouldn't say any more. Carter hurry up. I must have him off before the sun is up."

"She said, she'd drain the blood from my heart", said Mason. I saw Mr. Rochester shudder. An expression of horror and terror crossed his face. But he only said:



"Come, be silent, Richard, and never mind her nonsense, don't repeat it. There ! Carter has finished." He turned to me and asked me to fetch a clean shirt and neck handkerchief from his room. I left and soon returned with them.

"Was anyone up when you went downstairs ?" asked Mr. Rochester.

"No, Sir, all was quiet."

He sent me to Mason's room to fetch his cloak and again to his own room to fetch a phial and a little glass from there. He poured out a little of the liquid into the glass and gave it to Mr. Mason. It soon made him feel better-supported by Mr. Rochester and the surgeon. Mason was carried to a waiting coach. Keep him with you till he is quite well." Mr. Rochester told Carter. "I'll come over and see him in a day or two."

"Fairfax"..... .. began Mason.

"Well, what is it ?"

"Let her be taken care of; let her be treated as tenderly as may be. Let her..... . .. " he stopped and burst into tears.

"I do my best, I have done it and will continue to do it" was the answer. The coach door was shut and the vehicle drove away.

(Much later Jane learns that the creature in the inner room was actually Mr. Rochester's wife and Mr. Mason's sister. She is a violent lunatic and has been kept shut in a room for many years with a woman to look after her. One day she manages to escape and sets the house on fire. She herself dies. Jane, who is far away from Thornfield house at that time, learns about all these happenings. Read the book 'Jain Eyre' and find out what happens to her and Mr. Rochester).

1. "Jane, I have got a blow", when did Mr. Rochester say this ? Did Jane understand what it was all about ?
2. If all the friends of Rochester turned against him, would Jane do the same ? What would she do ?
3. (a) What did Jane hear in the middle of the night ?
   (b) The guests were nervous. How did Mr. Rochester pacify them ?
4. Mr. Rochester took Jane with him to the room of the wounded man because.
   (a) he trusted her
   (b) he liked her
   (c) she was his paid servant.
5. Before leaving the room to get the surgeon what did Mr. Rochester forbid Mr. Mason and Jane to do ?

Part II

1. (a) Describe the wound on Mr. Mason's shoulder.
   (b) What did Mr. Mason's attacker tell him ?
2. Mason was removed to the surgeon's house. What request did he make before leaving ?
3. Do you think Mr. Rochester was justified in keeping his insane wife under lock and key ?

11. THE MODEL MILLIONAIRE

Oscar Wilde
(adapted)

Hughie Erskine was wonderfully good-looking, with crisp, brown hair, clear cut profile and grey eyes. He was not particularly intelligent, it must be admitted, but he was very charming and was very popular with both men and women. He had many friends but hardly any money. He lived on the allowance of two hundred pounds a year given to him by an old aunt of his. He tried his hand at several jobs but did not make a success of any of them. Ultimately he became nothing, a delightful, ineffectual, young man with a perfect profile and no profession.

And Hughie was in love.

The girl he loved was Laura Morton, the daughter of a retired Colonel who had lost his temper and his digestion in India, and had never found either of them again. Laura adored Hughie too, but she did not have any money either. Her father was fond of Hughie but would not hear of any engagement. "Come to me, my boy, when you have ten thousand pounds of your own, we will see about it", he would say. Poor Hughie could see no way out of it.

One morning on his way to Laura's place, he stopped at his friend Alan Trevor's studio. Trevor was a painter. Personally he was a strange rough fellow, with a freckled face and a red ragged beard. However when he took up the brush he was a master, and his pictures were eagerly sought after. He had begun by liking Hughie for his charming looks, but on closer acquaintance he came to like him for his bright buoyant spirits and his generous reckless nature, and had given him permission to enter his studio any time he liked.

That morning Hughie found Trevor putting the finishing touches to a wonderful life-size picture of a beggarman. The beggar himself was standing on a raised platform, in a corner of the studio. He was a wizened old man, with a face like wrinkled parchment, and a most piteous expression. Over his shoulder was flung a coarse brown cloak, all torn and tattered. His thick boots were patched and

with one hand he leant on a rough stick, while with the other he held out his battered hat for alms. "Poor old chap." said Hughie. "How miserable he looks! How much does he get for a sitting? "
"A shilling an hour."

"And how much do you get for your picture, Alan? "
"Oh, for this I get two thousand."

"Pounds?"

"Guineas."

"Well, I think the model should have a percentage," cried Hughie, laughing, "they work quite as hard as you do."

"Nonsense ! nonsense !" replied Trevor, also laughing, and added, "but you mustn't chatter. I am very busy. Smoke a cigarette, and keep quiet."

After a while a servant came in and told Trevor that the frame-worker wanted to speak to him.

"Don't run away, Hughie." he said as he went out, "I'll be back in a moment."

The old beggar took the chance to lean back on a bench and rest. He looked so forlorn and unhappy that Hughie could not help pitying him. He looked in his pocket to see what money he had. All he could find was a sovereign and some coppers. "Poor old fellow," he thought to himself, "he wants it more than I do, but it means no more hansoms for a fortnight." He walked across the studio and slipped the sovereign into the beggar's hand.

The old man started, and a faint smile flitted across his withered lips.

"Thank you, sir," he said, "thank you."

Then Trevor came in and soon after Hughie left.

That night he strolled into Palette Club and found Trevor there. "Well Alan, did you get your picture finished all right ?" he asked as he lit his cigarette.

"Finished and framed, my boy," answered Trevor : "and by the way, that old model you saw is quite devoted to you. I had to tell him all about you—who you are, where you live, what your income is, what prospects you have."

"My dear Alan," cried Hughie, "I shall probably find him waiting for me when I go home. Poor wretch. I wish I could do something for him. I have got heaps of old clothes at home—do you think he would care for any of them ?"

"I'll tell him of your offer," said Trevor, smiling. "And now tell me how Laura is. The old model was quite interested in her."

"You don't mean to say that you talked to him about her ?" said Hughie.

"Certainly I did. He knows all about the relentless Colonel, the lovely Laura and the £10,000."

"You told that old beggar all my private affairs?" cried Hughie, looking very red and angry.

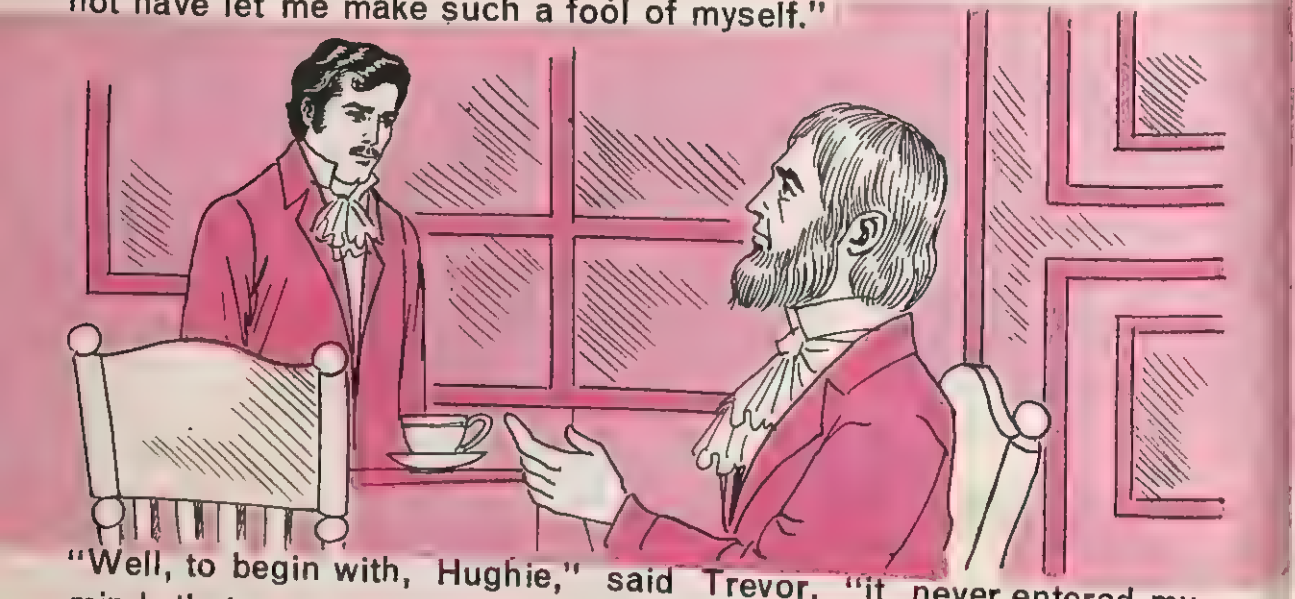
"My dear boy," said Trevor, smiling, "that old beggar, as you call him, is one of the richest men in Europe. He could buy all London tomorrow without overdrawing his account. He has a house in every capital, dines off gold plate, and can prevent Russia going to war when he chooses."

"What on earth do you mean?" exclaimed Hughie.

"What I say," said Trevor. "The old man you saw today in the studio is Baron Hausberg. He is a great friend of mine; buys all my pictures, and that sort of thing, and gave me a commission a month ago to paint him as a beggar. It is the whim of a millionaire. And I must say he made a magnificent figure in his rags, or perhaps I should say my rags; they are an old suit I got in Spain."

"Baron Hausberg!" cried Hughie. "Good heavens! I gave him a sovereign!" and he sank into an arm-chair, the picture of dismay.
"Gave him a sovereign!" shouted Trevor, and burst into a roar of laughter. "My dear boy, you'll never see it again. His business is with other men's money."

"I think you might have told me, Alan," said Hughie sulkily, "and not have let me make such a fool of myself."



"Well, to begin with, Hughie," said Trevor, "it never entered my mind that you went about distributing alms in that reckless way. Besides, I didn't know whether Hausberg would like his name mentioned. You know he wasn't in full dress."
"What a duffer he must think me," said Hughie.
"Not at all. He was in the highest spirits after you left; kept chuckling to himself and rubbing his old wrinkled hands together. I couldn't make out why he was so interested to know all about you; but I see it all now. He'll invest your sovereign for you, Hughie, pay you the interest every six months and have a capital story to tell after dinner."
"The best thing I can do is to go to bed; and, my dear Alan, you mustn't tell anyone. I shouldn't dare show my face in the Row."
"Nonsense! It reflects the highest credit on your generous spirit, Hughie." Hughie walked home, feeling very unhappy, and leaving Alan Trevor in fits of laughter.

The next morning as he was at breakfast, the servant brought him up a card on which was written, "Monsieur Gustave Naudin, on behalf of M.le Baron Hausberg." "I suppose he has come for an apology," said Hughie to himself; and he told his servant to show the visitor up.

An old gentleman with gold spectacles and grey hair came into the room and said in a slight French accent, "Have I the honour of addressing Monsieur Erskine?" Hughie bowed.

"I have come from Baron Hausberg," he continued, "The Baron———"

"I beg, sir, that you will offer him my sincerest apologies," stammered Hughie.

"The Baron," said the old man with a smile, "has commissioned me to bring you this letter;" and he held out a sealed envelope. On the outside was written, "A wedding present to Hugh Erskine and Laura Merton, from an old beggar," and inside was a cheque for £10,000.

When they were married Alan Trevor was the best man. and the Baron made a speech at the wedding breakfast.
"Millionaire models," remarked Alan, "are rare enough; but by Jove, model millionaires are rarer still."

EXERCISES

1. Hughie Erskine was a very hard-working man. Do you agree with this statement ? Give a reason for your answer.
2. Laura's father was a mild-tempered man. Do you agree with this statement ? Give a reason for your answer.
3. Alan Trevor liked Hughie because he was very good-looking. Do you agree with this statement ? If so, why ?
4. What did Hughie give the 'model' ? Does this show that Hughie was kind or foolish ? Give a reason for your answer
5. "What a duffer he must think me," said Hughie. Who is he referring to ? Why did he feel that the person would think him a foolish man ?
6. Alan Trevor had travelled abroad. Which part of the world had he visited ?
7. Describe Baron Hunsberg as
   a) a millionaire model
   b) a model millionaire

Printed at Karan Printers, N. Delhi

AMBAR PARKASHAN
888, East Park Road, Karol Bagh,
NEW DELHI-110005 (INDIA)
Studio: K.Sketchi